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Portrait by Sir Godfrey Kneller

Portrait in Paris

Addison

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY LETTERS

Reginald
EDITED BY R. BRIMLEY JOHNSON

Vol. II.

SWIFT
ADDISON
STEELE

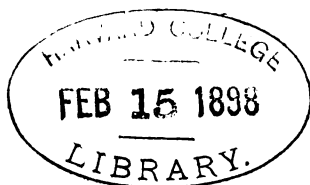
With an Introduction
by
STANLEY LANE-POOLE

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE voluminous and interesting correspondence of the Eighteenth Century—when letter-writing was indeed an art—can only be read at present in more or less elaborate and expensive complete editions, or in small anthologies containing at most half-a-dozen letters by the same writer.

The aim of the present series is to present a selection of this inexhaustible material in groups, each sufficiently large to create an atmosphere. No attempt has been made to seek out one-letter men, or to unearth a neglected genius ; but the leaders of thought and action—in so far as they wrote good letters—are represented by their most characteristic work, collected from all authentic sources.

The choice of particular letters has been governed by literary rather than historical or even biographical considerations ; and each volume should be readable and complete in itself ; illustrative at once of style and manners. To this end elaborate annotation seems tiresome and out of place, and incidental

EDITOR'S PREFACE

references to trifling persons and events are deliberately neglected. The notes are designed to elucidate, not to interrupt, the narrative.

Letters in foreign languages, almost all diplomatic correspondence, and philosophical or literary essays published as letters are omitted ; while on the other hand selections have been sometimes made from letters in journal form.

It is hoped to cover the whole century ; and the volumes will be ultimately arranged, though not originally published, in chronological order ; the rule of birth date being in some cases slightly modified for the union of friends or writers of one class.

R. B. J.

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INTRODUCTION

THE correspondence collected in this volume centres on the incomparable influence of Swift. Probably no prominent character has been more cruelly misjudged. Popular opinion has been guided by the superficial sketches of Macaulay, Thackeray, and Taine, and has not stopped to consider that a brilliant presentment is not necessarily an historical portrait. One has only to study Swift's letters to realize how utterly mistaken is the common view. To estimate him merely by his satires and political writings is to measure a brain and leave out body and soul. In his literary works he is all intellect—cold, even cruel intellect—and the milk of human kindness is turned sour. It is no wonder that the author of *A Tale of a Tub* and *Gulliver's Travels* has acquired the reputation of the bitterest cynic and misanthrope in all literature. It is the merit and virtue of the letters that they reveal the heart of one who in his public writings is mere head.

A common belief maintains, and generally rightly, that the best of a man comes out in his writings, when the cloak of reserve and self-consciousness is cast off and he dares to write what he would not venture to say. But this is not true of Swift. He

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preferred to show himself in a repellent character—he had a singular knack of “putting his worst foot foremost.” Bolingbroke, with customary insight, said of him that “Dr. Swift was a hypocrite reversed.” Instead of trying to persuade people that he was better than he really was, he took a perverse delight in making himself out worse. In his satires he is vigilantly on his guard, resolved to expose no weak joint in his armour, to give no handle to the enemy to discover that the man was after all flesh and blood, and not merely cold steel. One must turn to the letters to see the champion with his armour off, and then only shall we perceive the man behind the black vizard of the cynic. Here we discover that the cynicism is general and not particular; that (in his own words) “principally I hate and detest that animal called man, although I heartily love John, Peter, Thomas;” and that so strong was his affection for some of the animals, that he could write of Dr. Arbuthnot, perhaps the man of all others he most loved—“O, if the world had but a dozen Arbuthnots in it, I would burn my *Travels*.” The point of view is not unlike that of some modern Englishmen, who will declare that whilst they detest the French nation, there is no one they like better than the individual Frenchman.

One sees this counteracting feeling, this love for John, Peter, and Thomas, in Swift's correspondence—a correspondence happily so voluminous that it is impossible to misunderstand its import. Few men have enjoyed more intimate or enduring friendships, none perhaps was ever more loyal and staunch to his friends, than Dean Swift. When Addison in 1705 inscribed his *Travels* to him, he phrased his dedication

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"To Dr. Jonathan Swift, the most agreeable companion, the truest friend, and the greatest genius of his age,"—and Addison was not wont to be effusive. Swift's friends were of all ranks, parties, professions, and dispositions. Two statesmen so diverse as Harley and St. John treated him like a brother, in spite of his imperious, almost insolent manner, and his many whims and eccentricities. That he fully returned their affection is clearly shown, notably by the agony of apprehension he suffered when Harley was wounded by Guiscard's dagger. When Harley fell and St. John, then Viscount Bolingbroke, stepped into his place, both wrote to Swift, the first to claim his sympathy, the other to invite him to share his triumph. Ambitious as he was, Swift did not hesitate for an instant: he wrote that he would gladly share the fallen minister's retirement, and refused to profit by his friend's defeat. Many of his closest friendships were made or cemented in one or other of the social clubs in which he was a conspicuous figure. The "Brothers" came first, and then he helped to found the "Scriblerus." In both, men of all ranks met on terms of social equality; wit and conversation were the only conditions of membership, and these certainly were not wanting. A society which included Swift, and his old schoolfellow Congreve, "whom I loved from my youth," Atterbury, Pope, Gay, Parnell, Prior, Rowe, and Arbuthnot, must have realized the Olympian revels, *noctes cœnæque deorum*. The warmth of these friendships never cooled; we find it still glowing in the ample correspondence of later years, in the letters written by a disappointed exile from his distant deanery to his friends of "lang syne" in London, letters which, with all their melancholy and

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dissatisfaction, are yet full of a philosophic dignity and display the finest side of Swift's nature. Except Steele (and it was Steele's own doing), Swift never lost a friend. Even Addison, in spite of vivid contrasts of character and politics, remained always faithful to the old alliance.

It was not only men of genius or of position who discovered Swift's largeness of heart. In his later years the people of Dublin had good cause to value their dean, and when he was in danger of arrest after the publication of the *Drapier's Letters*, the enthusiasm of the people broke out in the cry that was on every lip—"Shall *Jonathan* die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: as the Lord liveth there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day." With those in trouble or straitened means Swift's friendship was another name for active benevolence. "While still a struggling priest, more than one-tenth of what he expended he expended in charity. As his fortune increased his generosity increased with it. As soon as his political services gave him influence, his first thought was for his friends. 'When I had credit for some years at Court,' he writes to Lady Betty Germain, 'I provided for above fifty people in both kingdoms, of which not one was a relative.' To his recommendation Congreve, Gay, Rowe, Friend, Ambrose Philips, and Steele, owed remunerative offices. 'You never come to us,' said Bolingbroke on one occasion, half angrily, 'without bringing some Whig in your sleeve.' He obtained for King, who had libelled and insulted him, a post which relieved that facetious writer from the pressure of want. His kindness to young Harrison and poor

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Diaper would alone suffice to prove the goodness of his heart. He made the fortune of Barber. He went out of his way to serve Parnell and Berkeley. It was through his influence that Trapp became Bolingbroke's chaplain. How greatly Pope profited from his zealous friendship Pope has himself acknowledged."¹

Not men alone enjoyed Swift's trusty friendship : he was on affectionate terms with many women, to whom indeed more than half the letters in this volume are addressed. He had an immense craving for sympathy, and he naturally found its satisfaction among women. That he gave as much as he received is abundantly clear, and it is a mistake to ascribe the fascination which he undoubtedly exercised solely to the "eye azure as the heavens," to the brilliant intellect, or to the masterful qualities which are said sometimes to commend a man to the fair. Kindness and unselfishness counted for something in their eyes, we may be sure. Swift could show great tenderness and delicacy of feeling in cases of sorrow and bereavement, and this was why he was chosen to try to allay the first frantic outburst of grief of the Duchess of Hamilton after her husband's death at the hand of Lord Mohun : "She has moved my very soul," he says. Soon after, his "greatest favourite," Lady Ashburnham, daughter of his old friend the Duke of Ormond, died suddenly in all the freshness of her youth. "I hate life," he writes in despair, "when I think it exposed to such accidents, and to see so many thousand wretches burdening the earth, while such as her die, makes me think God did never intend life to be a blessing." When Mistress Ann Long, the famous

¹ J. CHURTON COLLINS : *Jonathan Swift*, p. 12 (1893).

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toast of the Kit Cat Club, for whom Swift had an old friendship and with whom he had concluded a whimsical treaty of alliance, died in poverty and distress, he was deeply affected. "She was the most beautiful person of the age she lived in, of great honour and virtue, infinite sweetness and generosity of temper, and true good sense. I never was more afflicted at any death."

Swift shared his pleasures as well as his sorrows with his women friends. Instead of the coffee-houses which he frequented in earlier days, he loved to spend his evenings in ladies' society. "I dined with Lady Betty Germain," he writes to Stella, "and there was the young Earl of Berkeley and his fine lady. . . . Lady Berkeley after dinner clapped my hat on another lady's head, and she in roguery put it on the rails. I minded them not, but in two minutes they called me to the window, and Lady Carteret showed me my hat out of her window, five doors off, where I was forced to walk to it, and pay her and old Lady Weymouth a visit, with some more beldames; then I went and drank coffee and made one or two puns with Lord Pembroke. . . . Then I sat an hour with Lady Betty Butler at tea," etc. Swift vastly enjoyed this pleasant fooling (in high society), and cultivated his lady friends with much assiduity. Obviously they were not afraid of him, but took his lectures and scoldings in good part. He loved to play the mentor to women and improve their minds, in the character of a society father confessor; and it was a miracle that in so dangerous an office he only once met with disaster. He had, it must be allowed, a fatal fondness for walking over thin ice; but he also enjoyed a remarkable immunity from immersion.

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There is nothing very unusual, however, in Swift's social relations with women : it is only when we touch upon his two close intimacies that we encounter some of the debatable problems of biography. We refer, of course, to the old, old story of Stella and Vanessa. As a general rule there is no reason why the public should concern itself about the private relations of a great man, and to a sensitive mind there is a certain sense of indelicacy about the investigation. In the case of Swift, however, we are released from such conscientious scruples, inasmuch as the materials have long been public property, and part of them were published during his lifetime. The publication of the *Journal to Stella* and of the correspondence with Miss Vanhomrigh, together with Swift's own autobiography of a passion, *Cadenus and Vanessa*, leaves one no option but to seek a solution of these mysteries. The *Journal to Stella* is, next (even if next) to Pepys' *Diary*, the most minute and intimate record of the daily life of a public man that exists. Obviously written without a thought of publication, it has all the sincerity which is Swift's especial virtue. As Mr. Leslie Stephen has well said—"In reading the *Journal to Stella* we may fancy ourselves waiting in a parliamentary lobby during an excited debate. One of the chief actors hurries out at intervals ; pours out a kind of hasty bulletin ; tells of some thrilling incident, or indicates some threatening symptom ; more frequently he seeks to relieve his anxieties by indulging in a little personal gossip, and only interjects such comments upon politics as can be compressed into a hasty ejaculation, often, as may be supposed, of an imprecatory kind. Yet he unconsciously betrays his hopes and fears ; he is fresh from the thick

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of the fight, and we perceive that his nerves are still quivering and that his phrases are glowing with the ardour of the struggle."¹

That is one aspect of the *Journal*: the other is the curiously sympathetic association it reveals between this imperious statesman and a simple woman of thirty, still beautiful indeed² and of considerable parts, but wholly unacquainted with the great world in which he moved, of no birth or position, and as far as one can judge, of a somewhat practical and matter-of-fact disposition. Swift had known Esther Johnson when she was a little child at Moor Park, where he was acting as secretary to Sir William Temple. She became his pupil, his pet, his playmate. He delighted in developing her mind and leading her to scholarly tastes. As she grew up, the friendship took firmer root. "Stella," as he called her, became his closest companion, the confidante of his most secret thoughts and hopes, and the dearest friend he had in all the world. In the midst of his London distractions and engagements, his strenuous political work, the constant demands of ministers and calls of society, he never forgets the woman who waits at Dublin for his tidings. Every day, late at night after an evening with my lord treasurer, or propped up in bed in the early morning, he writes his gossiping journal; tells

¹ LESLIE STEPHEN : *Swift*, pp. 81-2.

² Portraits of Stella and Vanessa, by unknown painters, are in the possession of Mr. G. Villiers Briscoe of Bellinger, co. Meath. That of Stella belonged formerly to Charles Ford, whom she and Swift often visited. Both portraits are somewhat conventional, but in point of beauty Stella is incomparably superior to Vanessa, who appears rather hard-featured. Stella was dark, with raven hair, while Vanessa was fair with light eyes. The portraits are well reproduced in Mr. G. P. MORIARTY'S *Dean Swift* (1893).

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her everything he has been doing ; where he dined, and what he ate and drank ; the last news in politics, meetings with ministers and wits ; the state of his health and the physic he took for it ; the swim he had in the river off Chelsea, and how he lost his night-cap diving ; the misadventures of his incorrigible man Patrick—in short, every minute detail he can recall of the twenty-four hours, diversified with many execrable puns and doggerel verses. All this he writes exactly as though he were talking to her ; interrupting serious matters with playful ridicule of her handwriting or spelling, or her accounts of Dublin society ; or again with tender enquiries about her health and her delicate eyesight ; using frequently the “little language” which some staid critics have thought unworthy of so great a man. It is, of course, precisely the great man who can venture to unbend, and there is really nothing but what is natural and beautiful in Swift’s delight in recalling the half-articulate baby-talk which he and Stella exchanged when she was his child pet at Moor Park twenty odd years before—the one bright spot in the gloomy and desolate dawn of his manhood. “Must loo mimitate Pdfr, pay ? Iss, and so la shall. And so leles fol ee rettle. Dood mollow.” It is just what a child would say who mixes up *l*’s and *r*’s, and can only half articulate. Swift’s loving recollection of it, in the busiest moments of his life, is singularly touching.

The question which has perplexed biographer after biographer is, Why with all this affection did not Swift marry Stella ? Granted that his means forbade it when he drew but £230 a year from his Irish livings, surely he could afford a wife when in 1714 he became dean of St. Patrick’s. There is of course

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a legend that he did marry her in 1716, though it is not pretended that the marriage, if it took place, was anything more than a formal ceremony. As a matter of fact there is not a tittle of positive evidence for the marriage worth print and paper.¹ Who places the slightest faith in so unscrupulous and self-contradictory a gossip-monger as Orrery? Or who will be convinced because Monck-Berkeley says that the widow of Bishop Berkeley told him that her husband told her that the Bishop of Clogher told him, etc.? And this crops up three-quarters of a century after the alleged ceremony! There is clearly no case to go to the jury. On the other hand everything we know about Swift and Stella points to the opposite conclusion. In 1704 Swift distinctly told a suitor for Stella's hand that he had no intention of marrying her. He writes her birthday odes, with such lines as these—

“With friendship and esteem possessed
I ne'er admitted love a guest.”

When he expects hourly to hear of her death, he writes to a common friend—“Believe me, that violent friendship is much more lasting and engaging than violent love.” On the very night of Stella's death, in the pathetic pages written in the first agony of an unquenchable grief, he terms her “the truest, most virtuous, and valuable friend that I, or perhaps any other person, was ever blessed with.” This was no moment for maintaining the hypocrisy of a useless fiction, in a document, too, intended only for his own

¹ The “evidence” has been ably discussed, and laughed out of court, in an article in *Blackwood's Magazine* for March 1883, and by MR. CHURTON COLLINS in his *Jonathan Swift*, pp. 147—156 (1893).

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eyes. Stella, for her part, in two legal documents executed after the supposed marriage, and in her will drawn a month before her death, styles herself "spinster." Mrs. Dingley, her lifelong companion and chaperon, *without whose presence Swift never saw her*, utterly repudiated the rumour of a marriage. So did Stella's executors. So did two of Swift's house-keepers. So did Dr. Lyon, who took charge of the dean in his last pitiable years of imbecility, when the enfeebled mind might well give up its secret. Can negative evidence go further?

The marriage legend is merely the result of the tittle-tattle which such a relationship would naturally create. That relationship we believe to have been pure steadfast friendship, without a touch of passion. There is nothing to show that Stella wished it otherwise; indeed it is conceivable that many women might prefer to be the "dearest friend" of Dean Swift than the wife of any other man. Stella seems to have been of a placid temperament—

"Pudor et Iustitiae soror
Incorrupta Fides, nudaque Veritas"—

and she was seemingly content with her lot.

Whilst it may be taken as certain that Swift did not marry Stella, it may reasonably be asked why he did not. Numerous suggestions have been made in answer to this question, but none seems wholly satisfactory. The ordinary explanation of physical objections is clearly negatived by the fact that Swift made a pressing offer of marriage to Varina (Miss Waryng), in 1696. There is no doubt, however, that, after this, he gradually acquired a morbid horror

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of marriage. He had an unfortunate tendency to see the offensive side of things; he was a victim to what has been well termed "the fascination of repulsion"; a depraved imagination turned perfectly innocent and natural processes into foulness. To him there was something unclean in what others regarded as a holy sacrament. But there was another reason which seems to account, better than the rest, for Swift's celibacy. His uncle Godwin had died insane, and he was himself troubled with strange pains in the head, and giddiness, which might well lead him to fear that he had inherited the taint. His well-known remark that, like the withered tree, he would "die at the top," confirms this suspicion; and if this be so, it is certain that a man of his scrupulously honourable and conscientious character would never consent to propagate the seeds of madness. We now know¹ that his painful disease in the ear had nothing to do with madness, and that, though imbecile in his old age, he never became insane. But he could not foresee this, and the dreadful fate he anticipated was enough to make marriage impossible.

One cannot, unfortunately, dismiss Swift's woman-friendships without referring to his disastrous relations with Vanessa—the one discreditable episode in his career, for which the only possible excuse is that for once he was carried away by his "feelings." The *Journal to Stella* contains frequent references to visits to Mrs. Vanhomrigh, a merchant's widow, who lived in Bury Street, St. James's, where Swift was intro-

¹ See DR. BUCKNILL'S letter in CHURTON COLLINS, Appendix I.

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duced by Sir Andrew Fountaine in 1708. The references are perhaps suspiciously apologetic. The day was wet, so he could get no further than "Mrs. Van's"; or Sir Andrew would have him go with him and dine there; or he finds the house convenient to hang up his gown, whilst he is living out at Chelsea, and he has to go in to get it, and so forth. Stella is rather surprised that he visits such "plain people" so often, but she does not suspect the truth. He does indeed carelessly mention Mrs. Vanhomrigh's "daughter's birthday," but he never says a word that would lead one to infer that he was practically domesticated in the house, and that the elder of Mrs. Van's daughters, a singularly clever and attractive girl of nineteen, was regularly pursuing her studies under his direction, exactly as Stella herself had done many years before. It is only fair and reasonable to believe that he had no idea of the risk he ran, and that the mischief was done before he was at all conscious of the danger. He did not realize that he had now no tranquil Stella to deal with, but a young woman of violent passions, and very little feminine reserve. Vanessa, as he called Hester Vanhomrigh, frankly undeceived him, just before 1713, declared her passion, and threw herself upon his mercy. Swift's reply and explanation is given in that unique autobiographical poem, *Cadenus and Vanessa*, in which the story of their relations is told so clearly and frankly that the piece has almost the force of an affidavit. He protests his ignorance of love—

"Cadenus, common forms apart,
In every scene had kept his heart;
Had sigh'd and languish'd, vow'd and writ,
For pastime, or to show his wit;

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But books, and time, and state affairs
Had spoil'd his fashionable airs :
He now could praise, esteem, approve,
But understood not what was love.
His conduct might have made him styl'd
A father, and the nymph his child.
That innocent delight he took
To see the virgin mind her book,
Was but the master's secret joy
In school to hear the finest boy."

He admits that, "to his grief and shame," he "could scarce oppose Vanessa's flame," and then offers friendship "which gently warms but cannot burn," and—

"His want of passion will redeem
With gratitude, respect, esteem."

Vanessa, however, he finds will have none of this: "a truce with all sublime conceits," and resolves to teach him the art of love, of which he seems so deplorably ignorant. And then come the final damning lines—

"But what success Vanessa met
Is to the world a secret yet.
Whether the nymph, to please her swain,
Talks in a high romantic strain ;
Or whether he at last descends
To act with less seraphic ends ;
Or, to compound the business, whether
They temper love and books together,
Must never to mankind be told,
Nor shall the conscious Muse unfold." ¹

These last lines undo the effect of all that precedes them, and leave a decidedly unpleasant taste in the mouth. It must be remembered that the poem was written solely for Vanessa's eyes, and therefore must

¹ These lines do not appear in the earlier of the six editions published in 1726, but it is difficult to assume that they were forged. See MR. SULLY'S essay in the *Antiquarian Magazine*, January 1885.

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at least have been meant to be sincere. It was published, by her instructions, after her death, doubtless in revenge for Swift's final rupture with her; and it is unnecessary to say that it had an immense *vogue*. The impression one can hardly fail to derive both from *Cadenus and Vanessa*, and also from the later correspondence between them, is that whatever may have been the case at first, Swift did not remain unmoved by Vanessa's frantic passion, and that if ever he were "in love," in the common way of mankind, it was with her. It is difficult otherwise to explain why he did not break off the connexion at once—for it is ridiculous to suppose that a man of his powerful character could not keep a girl at arm's length. Instead of this the first letter he writes from his Berkshire retreat, after the death of Queen Anne, and the fall of Bolingbroke, is to Miss Vanhomrigh. And when soon after, on her mother's death, she comes to live in Dublin, or near it, on her small estate at Celbridge, Swift still answers her letters and arranges stolen meetings—under protest and with many remonstrances, it is true, but still he does it. Unless he were in love, one cannot understand his conduct: cruelty would have been far the greater kindness. In honour he could marry none but Stella, if he married at all, and the less he had to do with poor love-sick Vanessa the better for all three. Yet he must needs write to her (July 5, 1721, seven years after her arrival in Ireland)—"*Mais soyez assurée que jamais personne au monde n'a été aimée, estimée, adorée par votre ami que vous.*" The phrase is absolutely inexcusable, except on the ground that Swift was almost as passionately in love with Vanessa as she was with him. Mr. Churton Collins has felicitously

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quoted in this connexion, Webster's beautiful lines—

“Condemn you him for that the maid did love him?
So may you blame some fair and crystal river
For that some melancholic distracted woman
Hath drown'd herself in 't.”

There is no doubt about the “distracted woman,” but we are not so sure about the “crystal river,” which seems turbid after a spate. In our mind this was Swift's first and last genuine passion, and it is not to his credit. One stain, however, may at least be taken off his memory in regard to Vanessa. Scott's tragic story of the letter she wrote to Stella, which Stella gave to Swift; his vengeful ride to Marlay Abbey, and the “awful look” from which Vanessa died, is merely another of Orrery's splendid fictions. There is not a particle of evidence for the libel.

All phases of Swift's friendships will be found to be illustrated in the varied selection of letters comprised in this volume. Apart from the light they throw on the writer's character, they are delightful examples of their kind. “They possess the greatest charm letters can have, perfect sincerity and frankness: Swift writes as though he were talking face to face with his friends. But they have also the vigour, the terse directness, the finish of thought and expression, which were integral parts of Swift's composition, whether it were mere correspondence, or a classic like *Gulliver*.”¹ There is no one style in them; they vary with the mood of the writer and the character of the correspondent. Writing to Bolingbroke he uses a dignified, almost formal language, polished to a brilliance which recalls the political essay. The

¹ S. LANE-POOLE: *Swift's Letters and Journals*, p. v (1885).

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letters to his old chief, Harley, are the embodiment of affectionate regard, deferential without a trace of servility. To Pope he opens his mind freely, as equal to equal, with perfect unaffected frankness. With Gay he is less open, and a trifle patronizing, but full of a genial humour. Fun gets the upper hand when he writes to his Irish crony, unlucky Tom Sheridan, and pours out nonsense verses, or -ling rhymes (see p. 94), or banters him on the shortcomings of his topsy-turvy household at Quilca, or on the peculiarities of Madam Sheridan, who certainly had no cause to love her husband's critical friend. To Pope's Patty Blount he adopts a tone half quizzical, half tender, which exactly fits the occasion. One feels in each case that he is writing just as he would have spoken, and his manner changes precisely as his conversation adapted itself to his hearer.

The most striking and persistent characteristic of the letters written to Swift by his friends is their universal tone of respectful admiration. Obviously they all regarded him as their intellectual chief, and felt honoured by any mark of his regard. Among all his contemporaries not one would have ventured publicly to claim an equality with him, and it is very remarkable that this position of unrivalled supremacy never aroused, so far as can be traced, any feeling of envy or jealousy, from which, as a rule even friendship is not exempt. Swift seems to have exacted homage like a king, and no one ever thought of rebelling—except Steele, and Steele paid heavily for his temerity. "No one," says the latest biographer of Swift, "no one who is acquainted with the character of Swift, with his character as it appears in his own writings, as it has been illustrated

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in innumerable anecdotes, and as it has been delineated by those who were familiar with him, can fail to see that he belonged to the kings of human-kind. Like Innocent III, and like Chatham, he was one of those men to whom the world pays instinctive homage. Everything about him indicated superiority. His will was a will of adamant; his intellect was an intellect the power and keenness of which impressed or awed every one who approached him. And to that will and to that intellect was joined a temper singularly stern, dauntless, and haughty.”¹

The stern and imperious will is always what first appeals to one who studies Swift's commanding character. It is only after closer scrutiny that the more humane and generous qualities of the man reveal themselves. As I wrote twelve years ago—and I have found no cause for modification—“ I am confident that no one can read these letters without materially changing, if he ever held it, the traditional view of Swift as the morose cynic. There is nothing in all literature more tender than the *Journal to Stella*: the man who could write that, could fool so gaily with Sheridan, pour out his own sorrows, and his anxious care for his friends with such touching solicitude to Pope and Arbuthnot, who could keep his heart kindly and green for his friends in his old age, after years of trial and disappointment, was not the callous misanthrope he has been represented. The study of the private life and correspondence of Swift is a valuable corrective to the impressions derived from his literary works. One realizes that the man had a warmer heart than the author would have us believe.”

¹ J. CHURTON COLLINS : *Jonathan Swift*, pp. 70-71 (1893).

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The letters contained in the last sixty pages of this volume have nothing to say to Swift, and call for little comment. Addison appears to the best advantage in his charming letter to Congreve, written from Blois, and in his sympathetic encouragement of the young Earl of Warwick's taste for bird's-nesting. As a rule his epistolary style has the defect of his essays: it is too finished, formal, and self-conscious. He is so desperately afraid of betraying the least emotion, that he appears more frigid than he really was. *Sua-viter subridens*, he dares not break into a hearty laugh. "Elegant" to the point of exasperation, he conveys an unfortunate, and indeed erroneous, impression of insincerity. In vivid contrast to his polished periods, follow the frank natural letters of his literary colleague, genial Dick Steele, to his "lovely charmer," his "dear, dear Prue." Steele's was one of those sanguine, impulsive, emotional natures which never seem to grow up: he was a thoughtless, cheerful, improvident boy to the day of his death. His letters to his wife, ill-spelt, unconsidered, without a trace of elaboration, are the most spontaneous, unfeigned love-letters in the language. Always hoping, always repenting, always backsliding, the simple fellow throws himself upon his wife's clemency with touching self-abandonment. The absolute simplicity, honest fervour, and manly chivalry of these letters constitute their peculiar charm. His was not a chivalrous age, and his loyal and unselfish devotion to "the beautiful sex" is among his many titles to our regard. The "fond fool of a husband," writing while his ragged boy tumbles on the floor, or the "brats his girls" stand on either side of the table, presents a picture which one would not exchange for all the immaculate

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primness of Joseph Addison. The letters to "Prue" should be read side by side with the *Journal to Stella*. Both have the supreme merit of perfect sincerity, simplicity, and devotion. The difference between them is the difference between the strongly contrasted natures of the two writers. No one can doubt which was the more lovable, any more than which was the greater, man.

STANLEY LANE-POOLE.

Athenæum Club,
September 1897.

EIGHTEENTH - CENTURY LETTERS

FROM SWIFT

JOURNAL TO STELLA.

LONDON, September 9, Saturday, 1710.

I GOT here last Thursday, after five days travelling, weary the first, almost dead the second, tolerable the third, and well enough the rest; and am now glad of the fatigue, which has served for exercise; and I am at present well enough. The Whigs were ravished to see me, and would lay hold on me as a twig while they are drowning, and the great men making me their clumsy apologies, &c. But my Lord-Treasurer¹ received me with a great deal of coldness, which has enraged me so, I am almost vowing revenge. I have not yet gone half my circle; but I find all my acquaintance just as I left them. I hear my Lady Giffard is much at court, and Lady Wharton was ridiculing it the other day; so I have lost a friend there. I have not yet seen her, nor intend it; but I will contrive to see Stella's mother some other way. I writ to the Bishop of

¹ The Earl of Godolphin.

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Clogher from Chester; and I now write to the Archbishop of Dublin. Everything is turning upside down; every Whig in great office will, to a man, be infallibly put out; and we shall have such a winter as has not been seen in England. Everybody asks me, how I came to be so long in Ireland, as naturally as if here were my being; but no soul offers to make it so: and I protest I shall return to Dublin, and the canal at Laracor, with more satisfaction than I ever did in my life. The Tatler expects every day to be turned out of his employment; and the Duke of Ormond, they say, will be lieutenant of Ireland. I hope you are now peaceably in Presto's lodgings: but I resolve to turn you out by Christmas: in which time I shall either do my business, or find it not to be done. Pray be at Trim by the time this letter comes to you, and ride little Johnson, who must needs be now in good case. I have begun this letter unusually on the post night, and have already written to the archbishop, and cannot lengthen this. Henceforth I will write something every day to MD, and make it a sort of journal: and when it is full, I will send it whether MD writes or not: and so that will be pretty: and I shall always be in conversation with MD, and MD with Presto. Pray make Parvisol pay you the ten pounds immediately; so I ordered him. "They tell me I am growing fatter, and look better"; and, on Monday, Jervas is to retouch my picture. I thought I saw Jack Temple and his wife pass by me to-day in their coach; but I took no notice of them. I am glad I have wholly shaken off that family. Tell the provost I have obeyed his commands to the Duke of Ormond; or let it alone, if you please. I saw Jemmy

SWIFT TO STELLA

Leigh just now at the coffeehouse, who asked after you with great kindness : he talks of going in a fortnight to Ireland. My service to the dean, and Mrs. Walls, and her archdeacon. Will Frankland's wife is near bringing to bed, and I have promised to christen the child. I fancy you had my Chester letter the Tuesday after I writ. I presented Dr. Raymond to Lord Wharton at Chester. Pray let me know when Joe gets his money. It is near ten, and I hate to send by the bellman. MD shall have a longer letter in a week, but I send this only to tell I am safe in London ; and so farewell, &c.

Sept. 21.

I HAVE just received your letter, which I will not answer now ; God be thanked all things are so well. I find you have not yet had my second : I had a letter from Parvisol, who tells me he gave Mrs. Walls a bill of twenty pounds for me, to be given to you ; but you have not sent it. This night the parliament is dissolved : great news from Spain ; King Charles and Stanhope are at Madrid, and Count Staremberg has taken Pampeluna. Farewell. This is from St. James's Coffeehouse. I will begin my answer to your letter to-night ; but not send it this week. Pray, tell me whether you like this journal way of writing.—I do not like your reasons for not going to Trim. Parvisol tells me he can sell your horse. Sell it with a pox ? Pray let him know that he shall sell his soul as soon. What ? sell anything that Stella loves, and may sometimes ride ? It is hers, and let her do as she pleases : pray let him know this by the first that you know goes to Trim. Let him sell my gray and be hanged.

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Oct. 14.

Is that tobacco at the top of the paper, or what? I do not remember I slobbered. Lord, I dreamed of Stella, &c., so confusedly last night, and that we saw Dean Bolton and Sterne go into a shop; and she bid me call them to her, and they proved to be two parsons I knew not; and I walked without till she was shifting, and such stuff, mixed with much melancholy and uneasiness, and things not as they should be, and I know not how; and it is now an ugly gloomy morning.—At night. Mr. Addison and I dined with Ned Southwell, and walked in the Park; and at the coffeehouse I found a letter from the Bishop of Clogher, and a packet from MD. I opened the bishop's letter; but put up MD's, and visited a lady just come to town, and am now got into bed, and going to open your little letter: and God send I may find MD well, and happy, and merry, and that they love Presto as they do fires. O, I will not open it yet! yes I will! no I will not; I am going; I cannot stay till I turn over: what shall I do? my fingers itch: and I now have it in my left hand; and now I will open it this very moment—I have just got it, and am cracking the seal, and cannot imagine what is in it; I fear only some letter from a bishop, and it comes too late: I shall employ nobody's credit but my own. Well, I see through—Pshaw, it is from Sir Andrew Fountaine: what, another! I fancy that is from Mrs. Barton; she told me she would write to me; but she writes a better hand than this: I wish you would inquire; it must be at Dawson's office at the castle. I fear this is from Patty Rolt, by the scrawl. Well, I will read MD's letter. Ah, no; it is

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from poor Lady Berkeley, to invite me to Berkeley Castle this winter ; and now it grieves my heart : she says she hopes my lord is in a fair way of recovery : poor lady. Well, now I go to MD's letter : faith it is all right ; I hoped it was wrong. Your letter, N 3, that I have now received, is dated Sept. 26, and Manley's letter, that I had five days ago, was dated Oct. 3, that is a fortnight's difference : I doubt it has lain in Steele's office, and he forgot. Well, there is an end of that : he is turned out of his place ; and you must desire those who send me packets, to enclose them in a paper, directed to Mr. Addison, at St. James's Coffeehouse : not common letters, but packets : the Bishop of Clogher may mention it to the archbishop when he sees him. As for your letter, it makes me mad : flidikins, I have been the best boy in Christendom, and you come with your two eggs a-penny.—Well ; but stay, I will look over my book ; adad, I think there was a chasm between my N 2 and N 3. Faith, I will not promise to write to you every week ; but I will write every night, and when it is full I will send it ; that will be once in ten days, and that will be often enough : and if you begin to take up the way of writing to Presto, only because it is Tuesday, [or] Monday bedad, it will grow a task ; but write when you have a mind.—No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no,—Agad, agad, agad, agad, agad, agad ; no, poor Stellakins. Slids, I would the horse were in your—chamber. Have I not ordered Parvisol to obey your directions about him ? and have not I said in my former letters, that you may pickle him, and boil him if you will ? What do you trouble me about your horses for ? Have I anything to do with them !—Revolutions a hindrance to me in my busi-

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ness ; revolutions—to me in my business? if it were not for the revolutions I could do nothing at all ; and now I have all hopes possible, though one is certain of nothing ; but to-morrow I am to have an answer, and am promised an effectual one. I suppose I have said enough in this and a former letter how I stand with new people ; ten times better than ever I did with the old ; forty times more caressed. I am to dine to-morrow at Mr. Harley's ; and if he continues as he has begun, no man has been ever better treated by another. What you say about Stella's mother, I have spoken enough to it already. I believe she is not in town ; for I have not yet seen her. My lampoon is cried up to the skies ; but nobody suspects me for it, except Sir Andrew Fountaine : at least they say nothing of it to me. Did not I tell you of a great man who received me very coldly? that is he ; but say nothing ; it was only a little revenge : I will remember to bring it over. The Bishop of Clogher has smoked my Tatler, about shortening of words, &c. But, God so ! &c.

Dec. 2.

STEELE, the rogue, has done the impudentest thing in the world : he said something in a Tatler, that we ought to use the word Great Britain, and not England, in common conversation, as, the finest lady in Great Britain, &c. Upon this Rowe, Prior, and I sent him a letter, turning this into ridicule. He has to-day printed the letter, and signed it J. S. M. P. and N. R. the first letters of our names. Congreve told me to-day, he smoked it immediately. Congreve and I and Sir Charles Wager dined to-day at Delaval's the Portugal envoy : and I staid there till eight, and

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came home, and am now writing to you before I do business, because that dog Patrick is not at home, and the fire is not made, and I am not in my gear. Pox take him!—I was looking by chance at the top of this side, and find I make plaguy mistakes in words ; so that you must fence against that as well as bad writing. Faith, I cannot nor will not read what I have written. (Pox of this puppy!) Well, I will leave you till I am got to bed, and then I will say a word or two.—Well, it is now almost twelve, and I have been busy ever since, by a fire too, (I have my coals by half a bushel at a time, I will assure you,) and now I am got to bed. Well, and what have you to say to Presto now he is abed? Come now, let us hear your speeches. No, it is a lie, I am not sleepy yet. Let us sit up a little longer, and talk. Well, where have you been to-day, that you are but just this minute come home in a coach? What have you lost? Pay the coachman, Stella. No, faith, not I, he will grumble.—What new acquaintance have you got? Come, let us hear. I have made Delaval promise to send me some Brazil tobacco from Portugal for you, Madam Dingley. I hope you will have your chocolate and spectacles before this comes to you.

Dec. 3.

PSHAW, I must be writing to those dear saucy brats every night, whether I will or no, let me have what business I will, or come home ever so late, or be ever so sleepy ; but an old saying and a true one,

Be you lords, or be you earls,
You must write to naughty girls.

I was to-day at court, and saw Raymond among the beef-eaters, staying to see the queen ; so I put

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him in a better station, made two or three dozen of bows, and went to church, and then to court again to pick up a dinner, as I did with Sir John Stanley, and then we went to visit Lord Mountjoy, and just now left him, and it is near eleven at night, young women, and methinks this letter comes pretty near to the bottom, and it is but eight days since the date, and do not think I will write on the other side, I thank you for nothing. Faith, if I would use you to letters on sheets as broad as this room, you would always expect them from me. O faith, I know you well enough; but an old saying, &c.

Two sides in a sheet,
And one in a street.

I think that is but a silly old saying, and so I will go to sleep, and do you so too.

Feb. 22, 1711.

IT snowed all this morning prodigiously, and was some inches thick in three or four hours. I dined with Mr. Lewis of the secretary's office at his lodgings: the chairmen that carried me squeezed a great fellow against a wall, who wisely turned his back, and broke one of the side glasses in a thousand pieces. I fell a scolding, pretended I was like to be cut to pieces, and made them set down the chair in the Park, while they picked out the bits of glasses: and when I payed them, I quarrelled still, so they dared not grumble, and I came off for my fare: but I was plaguy afraid they would have said, God bless your honour, will not you give us something for our glass? Lewis and I were forming a project how I might get three or four hundred pounds, which I suppose may come to nothing. I hope Smyth has brought your palsy drops; how does Stella do? I

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begin more and more to desire to know. The three weeks since I had your last is over within two days, and I will allow three for accidents.

Feb. 26.

I WAS this morning with Mr. Secretary about some business, and he tells me that Colonel Fielding is now going to make Bernage his captain-lieutenant, that is, a captain by commission, and the perquisites of the company, but not captain's pay, only the first step to it. I suppose he will like it, and the recommendation to the Duke of Argyle goes on. And so trouble me no more about your Bernage; the jackanapes understands what fair solicitors he has got, I warrant you. Sir Andrew Fountaine and I dined by invitation with Mrs. Vanhomrigh. You say they are of no consequence; why, they keep as good female company as I do male; I see all the drabs of quality at this end of the town with them; I saw two Lady Bettys there this afternoon. The beauty of one, the good breeding and nature of the other, and the wit of neither, would have made a fine woman. Rare walking in the Park now; why do not you walk in the Green of St. Stephen? the walks there are finer gravelled than the Mall. What beasts the Irish women are, never to walk!

March 8.

O DEAR MD, my heart is almost broken. You will hear the thing before this comes to you. I writ a full account of it this night to the Archbishop of Dublin; and the dean may tell you the particulars from the archbishop. I was in a sorry way to write, but thought it might be proper to send a true account of the fact; for you will hear a thousand

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lying circumstances. It is of Mr. Harley's being stabbed this afternoon at three o'clock at a committee of the council. I was playing Lady Catherine Morris's cards, where I dined, when young Arundel came in with the story. I ran away immediately to the secretary, which was in my way: no one was at home. I met Mrs. St. John in her chair; she had heard it imperfectly. I took a chair to Mr. Harley, who was asleep, and they hope in no danger; but he has been out of order, and was so when he came abroad to-day, and it may put him in a fever: I am in mortal pain for him. That desperate French villain, Marquis de Guiscard, stabbed Mr. Harley. Guiscard was taken up by Mr. Secretary St. John's warrant for high treason, and brought before the lords to be examined; there he stabbed Mr. Harley. I have told all the particulars already to the archbishop. I have now at nine sent again, and they tell me he is in a fair way. Pray pardon my distraction! I now think of all his kindness to me.—The poor creature now lies stabbed in his bed by a desperate French Popish villain. Good night, and God preserve you both, and pity me; I want it.

March 9, Morning; seven, in bed.

PATRICK is just come from Mr. Harley's. He slept well till four; the surgeon sat up with him: he is asleep again: he felt a pain in his wound when he waked: they apprehend him in no danger. This account the surgeon left with the porter, to tell people that send. Pray God preserve him. I am rising and going to Mr. Secretary St. John. They say Guiscard will die with the wounds Mr. St. John and the rest gave him. I shall tell you more at night.—Night.

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Mr. Harley still continues on the mending hand; but he rested ill last night, and felt pain. I was early with the secretary this morning, and I dined with him, and he told me several particularities of this accident, too long to relate now. Mr. Harley is still mending this evening, but not at all out of danger; and till then I can have no peace. Good night, &c., and pity Presto.

May 29.

I WAS this morning in town by ten, though it was shaving day, and went to the secretary about some affairs, then visited the Duke and Duchess of Ormond; but the latter was dressing to go out, and I could not see her. My Lord Oxford had the staff given him this morning; so now I must call him Lord Oxford no more; but lord-treasurer: I hope he will stick there; this is twice he has changed his name this week; and I heard to-day in the city (where I dined) that he will very soon have the garter.—Prithee, don't you observe how strangely I have changed my company and manner of living? I never go to a coffeehouse; you hear no more of Addison, Steele, Henley, Lady Lucy, Mrs. Finch, Lord Somers, Lord Halifax, &c. I think I have altered for the better. Did I tell you the Archbishop of Dublin has writ me a long letter of a squabble in your town about choosing a mayor, and that he apprehended some censure for the share he had in it. I have not heard anything of it here; but I shall not be always able to defend him. We hear your Bishop Hickman is dead; but nobody here will do anything for me in Ireland; so they may die as fast or slow as they please.—Well, you are constant to your deans, and

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your Stoyte, and your Walls. Walls will have her tea soon; parson Richardson is either going or gone to Ireland, and has it with him. I hear Mr. Lewis has two letters for me: I could not call for them to-day, but will to-morrow; and perhaps one of them may be from our little MD, who knows, man? who can tell? Many more unlikely thing has happened.—Pshaw, I write so plaguy little, I can hardly see it myself. *Write bigger, sirrah* Presto. No, but I won't. O, you are a saucy rogue, Mr. Presto, you are so impudent. Come, dear rogues, let Presto go to sleep: I have been with the dean, and 'tis near twelve.

June 6, Morning.

THIS letter shall go to-morrow; so I will answer yours when I come home to-night. I feel no hurt from last night's swimming. I lie with nothing but the sheet over me, and my feet quite bare. I must rise and go to town before the tide is against me. Morrow, sirrahs; dear sirrahs, morrow.—At night. I never felt so hot a day as this since I was born. I dined with Lady Betty Germain, and there was the young Earl of Berkeley and his fine lady. I never saw her before, nor think her near so handsome as she passes for.—After dinner Mr. Bertue would not let me put ice in my wine; but said my Lord Dorchester got the bloody flux with it, and that it was the worst thing in the world. Thus are we plagued, thus are we plagued; yet I have done it five or six times this summer, and was but the drier and the hotter for it. Nothing makes me so excessively peevish as hot weather. Lady Berkeley after dinner clapped my hat on another lady's head, and she in roguery put it upon

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the rails. I minded them not, but in two minutes they called me to the window, and Lady Carteret showed me my hat out of her window five doors off, where I was forced to walk to it, and pay her and old Lady Weymouth a visit, with some more bell-dames, then I went and drank coffee, and made one or two puns with Lord Pembroke, and designed to go to lord-treasurer; but it was too late and besides I was half broiled, and broiled without butter; for I never sweat after dinner, if I drink any wine. Then I sat an hour with Lady Betty Butler at tea, and everything made me hotter and drier. Then I walked home, and was here by ten, so miserably hot, that I was in as perfect a passion as ever I was in my life at the greatest affront or provocation. Then I sat an hour till I was quite dry and cool enough to go swim; which I did, but with so much vexation, that I think I have given it over: for I was every moment disturbed by boats, rot them; and that puppy Patrick, standing ashore, would let them come within a yard or two, and then call sneakingly to them. The only comfort I proposed here in hot weather is gone; for there is no jesting with those boats after 'tis dark: I had none last night. I dived to dip my head, and held my cap on with both my hands, for fear of losing it.—Pox take the boats! Amen. 'Tis near twelve, and so I'll answer your letter (it strikes twelve now) to-morrow morning.

July 4.

STERNE came to me again this morning, to advise about reasons and memorials he is drawing up; and we went to town by water together; and having

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nothing to do, I stole into the city to an instrument of mine, and then went to see poor Patty Rolt, who has been in town these two months with a cousin of hers. Her life passes with boarding in some country town as cheap as she can, and when she runs out, shifting to some cheaper place, or coming to town for a month. If I were rich I would ease her, which a little thing would do. Some months ago I sent her a guinea, and it patched up twenty circumstances. She is now going to Berkhamstead, in Hertfordshire. It has rained and hailed prodigiously to-day, with some thunder. This is the last night I lie at Chelsea; and I got home early, and sat two hours with the dean, and eat victuals, having had a very scurvy dinner. I'll answer your letter when I come to live in town. You shall have a fine London answer: but first I'll go sleep, and dream of MD.

July 29.

I WAS at court and church to-day, as I was this day se'ennight; I generally am acquainted with about thirty in the drawing-room, and am so proud I make all the lords come up to me; one passes half an hour pleasant enough. We had a dunce to preach before the queen to-day, which often happens. Windsor is a delicious situation, but the town is scoundrel. I have this morning got the Gazette for Ben Tooke and one Barber a printer; it will be about three hundred pounds a-year between them. T'other fellow was printer of the Examiner, which is now laid down. I dined with the secretary, we were a dozen in all, three Scotch lords, and Lord Peterboro. Duke Hamilton would needs be witty, and hold up my train as I walked up stairs. It is an ill circumstance,

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that on Sundays much company meet always at the great tables. Lord-treasurer told at court, what I said to Mr. Secretary on this occasion. The secretary showed me his bill of fare, to encourage me to dine with him. Poh, said I, show me a bill of company, for I value not your dinner. See how this is all blotted, I can write no more here, but to tell you I love MD dearly, and God bless them.

Aug. 1.

• WE had for dinner the fellow of that haunch of venison I sent to London ; 'twas mighty fat and good, and eight people at dinner ; that was bad. The queen and I were going to take the air this afternoon, but not together ; and were both hindered by a sudden rain. Her coaches and chaises all went back, and the guards too : and I scoured into the market-place for shelter. I intended to have walked up the finest avenue I ever saw, two miles long, with two rows of elms on each side. I walked in the evening a little upon the terrace, and came home at eight : Mr. Secretary came soon after, and we were engaging in deep discourse, and I was endeavouring to settle some points of the greatest consequence ; and had wormed myself pretty well into him, when his under secretary came in (who lodges in the same house with us) and interrupted all my scheme. I have just left him ; 'tis late, &c.

Oct. 20.

THIS day has gone all wrong, by sitting up so late last night. Lord-treasurer is not yet well, and can't go to Windsor. I dined with Sir Matthew Dudley, and took occasion to hint to him that he would lose his employment, for which I am very sorry. Lord

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Pembroke and his family are all come to town. I was kept so long at a friend's this evening that I cannot send this to-night. When I knocked at my lodgings, a fellow asked me where lodged Dr. Swift? I told him I was the person: he gave me a letter he brought from the secretary's office, and I gave him a shilling: when I came up, I saw Dingley's hand: faith I was afraid, I do not know what. At last it was a formal letter from Dingley about her exchequer business. Well, I'll do it on Monday, and settle it with Tooke. And now, boys, for your letter, I mean the first, N 21. Let's see; come out, little letter. I never had the letter from the bishop that Raymond mentions; but I have written to Ned Southwell, to desire the Duke of Ormond to speak to his reverence, that he may leave off his impertinence. What a pox can they think I am doing for the archbishop here? You have a pretty notion of me in Ireland, to make me an agent for the Archbishop of Dublin.—Why; do you think I value your people's ingratitude about my part in serving them? I remit them their first-fruits of ingratitude, as freely as I got the other remitted to them. This lord-treasurer defers writing his letter to them, or else they would be plaguily confounded by this time. For, he designs to give the merit of it wholly to the queen and me, and to let them know it was done before the Duke of Ormond was lord-lieutenant. You visit, you dine abroad, you see friends; you pilgarlic; you walk from Finglass, you a cat's foot. O Lord—Lady Gore hung her child by the *waist*; what is that waist? I don't understand that word; he must hang on till you explain or spell it.—I don't believe he was pretty, that's a liiii.—Pish; burn your first-fruits; again at it. Stella has made

SWIFT TO STELLA

twenty false spellings in her writing ; I'll send them to you all back again on the other side of this letter, to mend them ; I won't miss one. Why ; I think there were seventeen bishops' names to the letter Lord Oxford received.—I will send you some pamphlets by Leigh ; put me in mind of it on Monday, for I shall go then to the printer ; yes, and the Miscellany. I am mightily obliged to Walls, but I don't deserve it by any usage of him here, having seen him but twice, and once *en passant*. Mrs. Manley forsworn ombre ! What ; and no blazing star appear ? no monsters born ? no whale thrown up ? have you not found out some evasion for her ? She had no such regard to oaths in her younger days. I got the books for nothing, Madam Dingley ; but the wine I got not ; it was but a promise.—Yes, my head is pretty well in the main, only now and then a little threatening or so.—You talk of my reconciling some great folks. I tell you what. The secretary told me last night, that he had found the reason why the queen was cold to him for some months past ; that a friend had told it him yesterday ; and it was, that they suspected he was at the bottom with the Duke of Marlborough. Then he said, he had reflected upon all I had spoken to him long ago ; but he thought it had only been my suspicion, and my zeal and kindness for him. I said I had reason to take that very ill, to imagine I knew so little about the world as to talk at a venture to a great minister ; that I had gone between him and lord-treasurer often, and told each of them what I had said to the other, and that I had informed him so before : he said all that you may imagine to excuse himself, and approve my conduct. I told him I knew all along that this proceeding of

mine was the surest way to send me back to my willows in Ireland, but that I regarded it not, provided I could do the kingdom service in keeping them well together. I minded him how often I had told lord-treasurer, lord-keeper, and him together, that all things depended on their union, and that my comfort was to see them love one another; and I had told them all singly that I had not said this by chance, &c. He was in a rage to be thus suspected; swears he will be upon a better foot, or none at all; and I do not see how they can well want him in this juncture. I hope to find a way of settling this matter. I act an honest part;—that will bring me neither honour nor praise. MD must think the better of me for it; nobody else shall ever know of it. Here's politics enough for once; but Madam D. D. gave me occasion for it. I think I told you I have got into lodgings that don't smell ill—O Lord! the spectacles: well, I'll do that on Monday too; although it goes against me to be employed for folks that neither you nor I care a groat for. Is the eight pounds from Hawkshaw included in the thirty-nine pounds five shillings and twopence? How do I know by this how my account stands? Can't you write five or six lines to cast it up? Mine is forty-four pounds *per annum*, and eight pounds from Hawkshaw makes fifty-two pounds. Pray set it right, and let me know; you had best.—And so now I have answered N 21, and 'tis late, and I will answer N 22 in my next: This cannot go to-night, but shall on Tuesday; and so go to your play, and lose your money, with your two eggs a-penny; silly jade; you witty? very pretty.

SWIFT TO STELLA

Nov. 13.

I DINED privately with a friend to-day in the neighbourhood. Last Saturday night I came home, and the drab had just washed my room, and my bed-chamber was all wet, and I was forced to go to bed in my own defence, and no fire; I was sick on Sunday, and now have got a swingeing cold. I scolded like a dog at Patrick, although he was out with me; I detest washing of rooms; can't they wash them in the morning, and make a fire, and leave open the windows? I slept not a wink last night for hawking and spitting: and now everybody has colds. Here's a clatter: I'll go to bed and sleep if I can.

Jan. 8, 1712.

WELL, then, come, let us see this letter; if I must answer it, I must. What's here now? yes faith, I lamented my birthday two days after, and that's all: and you rhyme, Madam Stella; were those verses made upon my birthday? faith, when I read them, I had them running in my head all the day, and said them over a thousand times; they drank your health in all their glasses, and wished, &c. I could not get them out of my head. What; no, I believe it was not; what do I say upon the eighth of December? Compare, and see whether I say so. I am glad of Mrs. Stoyte's recovery, heartily glad; your Dolly Manley's and Bishop of Cloyne's child I have no concern about: I am sorry in a civil way, that's all. Yes, yes, Sir George St. George dead.—Go, cry, Madam Dingley; I have written to the dean. Raymond will be rich, for he has the building itch. I wish all he has got may put him out of debt. Poh

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

I have fires like lightning ; they cost me twelvepence a-week, beside small coal. I have got four new caps, madam, very fine and convenient, with striped cambric, instead of muslin ; so Patrick need not mend them, but take the old ones. Stella snatched Dingley's word out of her pen ; Presto a cold ; why, all the world here is dead with them : I never had anything like it in my life ; 'tis not gone in five weeks. I hope Leigh is with you before this, and has brought your box. How do you like the ivory rasp ? Stella is angry ; but I'll have a finer thing for her. Is not the apron as good ? I am sure I shall never be paid it ; so all's well again.—What the quarrel with Sir John Walters ? Why, we had not one word of quarrel ; only he railed at me when I was gone : and lord-keeper and treasurer teased me for a week. It was nuts to them ; a serious thing with a vengeance.—The Whigs may sell their estates then, or hang themselves, as they are disposed ; for a peace there will be. Lord-treasurer told me, that Conolly was going to Hanover. Your provost is a coxcomb. Stella is a good girl for not being angry when I tell her of spelling ; I see none wrong in this. God Almighty be praised that your disorders lessen ; it increases my hopes mightily that they will go off. And have you been plagued with the fear of the plague ? never mind those reports ; I have heard them five hundred times. Replevi ? Replevin, simpleton, 'tis Dingley I mean ; but it is a hard word, and so I'll excuse it. I stated Dingley's accounts in my last. I forgot Catherine's sevenpenny dinner. I hope it was the beef-steaks ; I'll call and eat them in spring ; but Goody Stoyte must give me coffee, or green tea, for I drink no bohea. Well, ay,

SWIFT TO STELLA

the pamphlet ; but there are some additions to the fourth edition ; the fifth edition was of four thousand, in a smaller print, sold for sixpence. Yes, I had the twenty pound bill from Parvisol : and what then ? Pray now eat the Laracor apples ; I beg you not to keep them, but tell me what they are. You have had Tooke's bill in my last. And so there now, your whole letter is answered. I tell you what I do ; I lay your letter before me, and take it in order, and answer what is necessary ; and so and so. Well ; when I expected we were all undone, I designed to retire for six months, and then steal over to Laracor ; and I had in my mouth a thousand times two lines of Shakespeare, where Cardinal Wolsey says,

A weak old man, battered with storms of state,
Is come to lay his weary bones among you.

I beg your pardon ; I have cheated you all this margin ; I did not perceive it ; and I went on wider and wider like Stella ; awkward slut, *she writes so so, there*: that's as like as two eggs a penny.—*A weak old man*, now I am saying it, and shall till to-morrow.—The Duke of Marlborough says, there is nothing he now desires so much as to contrive some way how to soften Dr. Swift. He is mistaken ; for those things that have been hardest against him were not written by me. Mr. Secretary told me this from a friend of the duke's ; and I'm sure now he is down, I shall not trample on him ; although I love him not, I dislike his being out.—Bernage was to see me this morning, and gave some very indifferent excuses for not calling here so long. I care not twopence. Prince Eugene did not dine with the Duke of Marlborough on Sunday, but was last night at Lady

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

Betty Germain's assemblée, and a vast number of ladies to see him. Mr. Lewis and I dined with a private friend. I was this morning to see the Duke of Ormond, who appointed me to meet him at the cockpit at one, but never came. I sat too some time with the duchess. We don't like things very well yet. I am come home early, and going to be busy. I'll go write.

KENSINGTON, June 17, 1712.

I HAVE been so tosted about since my last, that I could not go on in my journal manner, though my shoulder is a great deal better; however, I feel constant pain in it, but I think it diminishes, and I have cut off some slices from my flannel. I have lodged here near a fortnight, partly for the air and exercise, partly to be near the court, where dinners are to be found. I generally get a lift in a coach to town, and in the evening I walk back. On Saturday I dined with the Duchess of Ormond at her lodge near Sheen, and thought to get a boat back as usual. I walked by the bank to Kew, but no boat, then to Mortlake, but no boat, and it was nine o'clock. At last a little sculler called, full of nasty people. I made him set me down at Hammersmith, so walked two miles to this place, and got here by eleven. Last night I had another such difficulty. I was in the city till past ten at night; it rained hard, but no coach to be had. It gave over a little, and I walked all the way here, and got home by twelve. I love these shabby difficulties when they are over; but I hate them, because they rise from not having a thousand pounds a-year. I had your N 30 about three days ago, which I will now answer. And first I did not

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relapse, but found I came out before I ought ; and so, and so, as I have told you in some of my last. The first coming abroad, the first going abroad made people think I was quite recovered, and I had no more messages afterwards. Well, but John Bull is not wrote by the person you imagine, as hope [saved]. It is too good for another to own. Had it been Grub Street, I would have let people think as they please ; and I think that's right : is not it now ? So flap your hand, and make wry mouth yourself, saucy doxy. Now comes DD. Why [sirrahs], I did write in a fortnight my 47th ; and if it did not come in due time, can I help wind and weather ? am I a Laplander ? am I witch ? can I work miracles ? can I make easterly winds ? Now I am against Dr. Smith. I drink little water with my wine, yet I believe he is right. Yet Dr. Cockburn told me a little wine would not hurt me ; but it is so hot and dry, and water is so dangerous. The worst thing here is my evenings at Lord Masham's, where lord-treasurer comes, and we sit till after twelve. But it is convenient I should be among them for a while as much as possible. I need not tell you why. But I hope that will be at an end in a month or two, one way or other, and I am resolved it shall ; but I can't go to Tunbridge, nor anywhere else out of the way, in this juncture. So Ppt designs for Templeoag, (what a name is that !) Whereabouts is that place ? I hope not very far from —. Higgins is here, roaring that all is wrong in Ireland, and would have me get him an audience of lord-treasurer to tell him so ; but I will have nothing to do in it, no, not I, fair Dublin [?] We have had no thunder till last night, and till then we were dead for want of rain ; but

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there fell a great deal: no field looked green. I reckon the queen will go to Windsor in three or four weeks: and if the secretary takes a house there, I shall be sometimes with him. But how affectedly Ppt talks of my being here all summer; which I do not intend: nor to stay one minute longer in England than becomes the circumstances I am in. I wish you would go soon into the country, and take a good deal of it; and where better than Trim? Jo will be your humble servant, Parvisol your slave, and Raymond at your command, for he piques himself on good manners. I have seen Dilly's wife—and I have seen once or twice old Bradley here. He is very well, very old, and very wise: I believe I must go see his wife, when I have leisure. I should be glad to see Goody Stoyte and her husband; pray give them my humble service, and to Katherine, and to Mrs. Walls—I cannot be least bit in love with Mrs. Walls—I suppose the cares of the husband increase with the fruitfulness of the wife. I am [glad at heart] to hear of Ppt's good health: pray let her finish it by drinking waters. I hope DD had her bill, and has her money. Remember to write a due time before the money is wanted, and be good girls, *dood dallars*, I mean, and no crying *dallars*. I heard somebody coming up-stairs, and forgot I was in the country; and I was afraid of a visitor; that is one advantage of being here, that I am not teased with solicitors. My service to Dr. Smith. Molt, the chemist, is my acquaintance. I sent the question to him about Sir Walter Raleigh's cordial, and the answer he returned is in these words: "It is directly after Mr. Boyle's receipt." That commission is performed; if he wants any of it, Molt shall use him

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fairly. I suppose Smith is one of your physicians. So, now your letter is fully and impartially answered ; not as rascals answer me : I believe, if I writ an essay upon a straw, I should have a shoal of answerers : but no matter for that ; you see I can answer you without making any reflections, as becomes men of learning. Well but now for the peace : why we expect it daily ; but the French have the stuff in their own hands, and we trust to their honesty. I wish it were otherwise. Things are now in the way of being soon in the extremes of well or ill.—I hope and believe the first. Lord Wharton is gone out of town in a rage, and curses himself and friends for ruining themselves in defending Lord Marlborough and Godolphin, and taking Nottingham into their favour. He swears he will meddle no more during this reign ; a pretty speech at sixty-six, and the queen is twenty years younger, and now in very good health ; for you must know her health is fixed by a certain reason, that she has done with braces, (I must use the expression,) and nothing ill is happened to her since ; so she has a new lease of her life. Read *The Letter to a Whig Lord*. Do you ever read ? Why don't you say so ? I mean does DD read to Ppt ? Do you walk ? I think Ppt should walk to DD, as DD reads to Ppt, for Ppt you must know is a good walker ; but not so good as Pdfr. I intend to dine to-day with Mr. Lewis : but it threatens rain ; and I shall be too late to get a lift ; and I must write to the Bishop of Clogher. It is now ten in the morning ; and this is all writ at a heat. Farewell, deelest, lele, deelest, me, me, me, MD, lele, &c.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

Nov. 16.

I THOUGHT to have finished this yesterday; but was too much disturbed. I sent a letter early this morning to Lady Masham, to beg her to write some comforting words to the poor duchess.¹ I dined to-day with Lady Masham at Kensington, where she is expecting these two months to lie in. She has promised me to get the queen to write to the duchess kindly on this occasion; and to-morrow I will beg lord-treasurer to visit and comfort her. I have been with her two hours again, and find her worse. Her violences not so frequent, but her melancholy more formal and settled. She has abundance of wit and spirit; about thirty-three years old; handsome and airy, and seldom spared anybody that gave her the least provocation; by which she had many enemies, and few friends. Lady Orkney, her sister-in-law, is come to town on this occasion, and has been to see her, and behaved herself with great humanity. They have been always very ill together, and the poor duchess could not have patience when people told her I went often to Lady Orkney's. But I am resolved to make them friends; for the duchess is now no more the object of envy, and must learn humility from the severest master, Affliction. I design to make the ministry put out a proclamation (if it can be found proper) against that villain Macartney. What shall we do with these murderers? I cannot end this letter to-night, and there is no occasion; for I cannot send it till Tuesday, and the coroner's inquest on the duke's body is to be to-morrow. And I shall know more. But what care you for all this? Yes, MD is sorry for

¹ Of Hamilton.

SWIFT TO STELLA

Pdfr's friends; and this is a very surprising event. 'Tis late, and I'll go to bed. This looks like journals. Night.

Nov. 17.

I WAS to-day at noon with the Duchess of Hamilton again, after I had been with Lady Orkney, and charged her to be kind to her sister in affliction. The duchess told me Lady Orkney had been with her, and that she did not treat her as gently as she ought. They hate one another, but I will try to patch it up. I have been drawing up a paragraph for the Post-Boy, to be out to-morrow, and as malicious as possible, and very proper for Abel Roper, the printer of it. I dined at lord-treasurer's at six in the evening, which is his usual hour of returning from Windsor; he promised to visit the duchess to-morrow, and says he has a message to her from the queen. 'Tis late: I have staid till past one with him. So night, dearest MD.

Jan. 3, 1713.

LORD DUPPLIN and I went with Lord and Lady Orkney this morning at ten to Wimbleton, six miles off, to see Lord and Lady Caermarthen. It is much the finest place about this town. Did you never see it? I was once there before, about five years ago. You know Lady Caermarthen is lord-treasurer's daughter, married about three weeks ago.—I hope the young fellow will be a good husband. I must send this away now. I came back just by nightfall, cruel cold weather; I have no soul yet, but my cold something better. I'll take my leave. I forgot how MD's accounts are. Pray let me know always timely before MD wants; and pray give the bill on the other side

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

to Mrs. Brent as usual. I believe I have not paid her this great while. Go, play at cards. **** Love Pdfr. Night, MD, FW, Me, Lele. The six odd shillings, tell Mrs. Brent, are for her new year's gift. I am just now told that poor dear Lady Ashburnham, the Duke of Ormond's daughter, died yesterday at her country house. The poor creature was with child. She was my greatest favourite, and I am in excessive concern for her loss. I hardly knew a more valuable person on all accounts. You must have heard me talk of her. I am afraid to see the duke and duchess. She was naturally very healthy; I am afraid she has been thrown away for want of care. Pray condole with me. 'Tis extremely moving. Her lord is a puppy; and I shall never think it worth my while to be troubled with him, now he has lost all that was valuable in his possession; yet I think he used her pretty well. I hate life when I think it exposed to such accidents; and to see so many thousand wretches burdening the earth, while such as her die, makes me think God did never intend life for a blessing. Farewell.

Jan. 10.

AT seven this evening, as we sat after dinner at lord-treasurer's, a servant said Lord Peterborow was at the dbor. Lord-treasurer and Lord Bolingbroke went out to meet him, and brought him in. He was just returned from abroad, where he has been above a year. Soon as he saw me, he left the Duke of Ormond and other lords, and ran and kissed me before he spoke to them; but chid me terribly for not writing to him, which I never did this last time he was abroad, not knowing where he was; and he

SWIFT TO STELLA

changed places so often, it was impossible a letter should overtake him. He left England with a bruise, by his coach overturning, that made him spit blood, and was so ill, we expected any post to hear of his death; but he outrode it, or outdrank it, or something, and is come home lustier than ever. He is at least sixty, and has more spirits than any young fellow I know in England. He has got the old Oxford regiment of horse, and I believe will have a garter. I love the hang-dog dearly. Night, dearest MD.

Feb. 6 [7].

THIS is the queen's birthday, and I never saw it celebrated with so much hurry and fine clothes. I went to court to see them, and I dined with lord-keeper, where the ladies were fine to admiration. I passed the evening at Mrs. Vanhomrigh's, and came home pretty early, to answer your rattle again. Pray God keep the queen. She was very ill about ten days ago, and had the gout in her stomach. When I came from lord-keeper's, I called at lord-treasurer's, because I heard he was very fine, and that was a new thing; and it was true, for his coat and waistcoat were embroidered. I have seen the provost often since, and never spoke to him to speak to the Temples about Daniel Carr, nor will; I don't care to do it. I have writ lately to Parvisol. You did well to let him make up his accompts. All things grow dear in Ireland, but corn to the parsons; for my livings are fallen much this year by Parvisol's account. Night, dearest rogues.

Feb. 13.

I WAS to see a poor poet, one Mr. Diaper, in a nasty garret, very sick. I gave him twenty guineas from

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

Lord Bolingbroke, and disposed the other sixty to two other authors, and desired a friend to receive the hundred pounds for poor Harrison, and will carry it to him to-morrow morning. I sent to see how he did, and he is extremely ill; and I very much afflicted for him, for he is my own creature, and in a very honourable post, and very worthy of it. I dined in the city. I am much concerned for this poor lad. His mother and sister attend him, and he wants nothing. Night, dear MD.

Feb. 14.

I TOOK Parnell this morning, and we walked to see poor Harrison. I had the hundred pounds in my pocket. I told Parnell I was afraid to knock at the door; my mind misgave me. I knocked, and his man in tears told me his master was dead an hour before. Think what grief this is to me! I went to his mother, and have been ordering things to his funeral with as little cost as possible, to-morrow at ten at night. Lord-treasurer was much concerned when I told him. I could not dine with lord-treasurer, nor anywhere; but got a bit of meat toward evening. No loss ever grieved me so much: poor creature! Pray God Almighty bless poor MD. Adieu. I send this away to-night, and am sorry it must go while I am in so much grief.

March 8.

YOU must know, I give chocolate almost every day to two or three people that I suffer to come to see me in a morning. My man begins to lie pretty well. 'Tis nothing for people to be denied ten times. My man knows all I will see, and denies me to everybody

SWIFT TO STELLA

else. This is the day of the queen's coming to the crown, and the day lord-treasurer was stabbed by Guiscard. I was at court, where everybody had their birthday clothes on, and I dined with lord-treasurer, who was very fine. He showed me some of the queen's speech, which I corrected in several places, and penned the vote of address of thanks for the speech ; but I was of opinion the House should not sit on Tuesday next, unless they hear the peace is signed ; that is, provided they are sure it will be signed the week after, and so have one scolding for all. Night, MD.

March 9.

LORD-TREASURER would have had me dine with him to-day ; he desired me last night, but I refused, because he would not keep the day of his stabbing with all the cabinet, as he intended ; so I dined with my friend Lewis ; and the provost and Parnell, and Ford, were with us. I lost sixteen shillings at ombre ; I don't like it, as &c. At night Lewis brought us word, that the parliament does not sit to-morrow. I hope they are sure of the peace by next week, and then they are right in my opinion : otherwise I think they have done wrong, and might have sat three weeks ago. People will grumble ; but lord-treasurer cares not a rush. Lord-keeper is suddenly taken ill of a quinsy, and some lords are commissioned, I think lord-treasurer, to prorogue the parliament in his stead. You never saw a town so full of ferment and expectation. Mr. Pope has published a fine poem, called Windsor Forest. Read it. Night, MD.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

TO VANESSA [MRS. ESTHER VANHOMRIGH, JUNIOR,]

*At her lodgings, over against Park-Place, in St. James's
Street, London.*

[August 1712.]

I THOUGHT to have written to little Missessy by the colonel, but at last I did not approve of him as a messenger. Mr. Ford began your health last night, under the name of the Jilt, for which I desire you will reproach him. I do neither study nor exercise so much here as I do in town. The colonel¹ will intercept all the news I have to tell you, of my fine snuff-box,² and my being at a ball, and my losing my money at ombre with the Duke and Duchess of Shrewsbury. I cannot imagine how you pass your time in our absence, unless by lying a-bed till twelve, and then having your followers about you till dinner. We have dispatches to-day from Lord Bolingbroke; all is admirably well, and a cessation of arms will be declared with France in London on Tuesday next. I dined with the Duke of Shrewsbury to-day, and sat an hour by Mrs. Warburton, teaching her when she played wrong at ombre, and I cannot see her defects; either my eyes fail me, or they are partial. But Mrs. Touchet is an ugly, awkward slut. What do you do all the afternoon? How come you to

¹ Vanessa's brother, who is called the captain below: or, more probably, Colonel Godfrey, mentioned in the Journal to Stella, September 21, 1711.

² Presented to Swift by General Hill, brother to Mrs. Masham. It is described in the Journal, September 18, and the device, of a goose and a snail, is humorously discussed in Swift's letter of thanks, August 12. It was of agate, richly mounted with gold, and allowed at court to be the finest in England.

SWIFT TO VANESSA

make it a secret to me that you all design to come to Windsor? If you were never here, I think you all cannot do better than come for three or four days; five pounds will maintain you, and pay for your coach backwards and forwards. I suppose the captain will go down with you now, for want of better company. I will steal to town one of these days, and catch you napping. I desire you and Moll will walk as often as you can in the Park, and do not sit moping at home, you that can neither work, nor read, nor play, nor care for company. I long to drink a dish of coffee in the sluttery, and hear you dun me for Secrete, and "Drink your coffee.—Why don't you drink your coffee?" My humble service to your mother, and Moll, and the colonel. Adieu.

End of May, 1712.

I PROMISED to write to you, and I have let you know that it is impossible for anybody to have more acknowledgments at heart for all your kindness and generosity to me. I hope this journey will restore my health. I will ride but little every day, and I will write a common letter to you all from some of my stages, but directed to you. I could not get here till ten this night. Pray be merry, and eat, and walk, and be good; and send me your commands, whatever Mr. L. shall think proper to advise you. I have hardly time to put my pen to paper, but I would make good my promise. Pray God preserve you, and make you happy and easy; and so adieu, brat.

Service to mother and Molkin.

Mrs. B.'s house, eleven at night, company *weighting*, who come to take leave of me.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

LARACOR, July 8, 1713.

I STAYED but a fortnight in Dublin, very sick, and returned not one visit of a hundred that were made me; but all to the dean and none to the doctor. I am riding here for life, and think I am something better, and hate the thoughts of Dublin, and prefer a field-bed and an earthen floor before the great house there which they say is mine. I had your last splenetic letter. I told you when I left England, I would endeavour to forget everything there, and would write as seldom as I could. I did, indeed, design one general round of letters to my friends, but my health has not yet suffered me. I design to pass the greatest part of the time I stay in Ireland here in the cabin where I am now writing; neither will I leave the kingdom till I am sent for; and if they have no further service for me, I will never see England again. At my first coming, I thought I should have died with discontent, and was horribly melancholy while they were installing me; but it begins to wear off, and change to dulness. My river walk is extremely pretty, and my canal in great beauty, and I see trout playing in it. I know not anything in Dublin, but Mr. Ford is very kind, and writes to me constantly what passes among you. I find you are likewise a good politician, and I will say so much to you, that I verily think, if the thing you know of had been published just upon the peace,¹ the ministry might have avoided what hath since happened. But I am now fitter to look after willows, and to cut hedges, than to meddle with affairs of state. I must order one of the workmen to drive

¹ The History of the Peace of Utrecht.

SWIFT TO VANESSA

those cows out of my island, and make up the ditch again ; a work much more proper for a country vicar, than driving out factions, and fencing against them. And I must go and take my bitter draught to cure my head, which is spoilt by the bitter draughts the public hath given me. How does Davila go on ? Johnny Clark is chosen portrieve of our town of Trim, and we shall have the assizes there next week, and fine doings ; and I must go and borrow a horse to meet the judges ; and Joe Beaumont, and all the boys that can get horses, will go too. Mr. Warburton has but a thin school. Mr. Percival has built up the other side of his house, but people whisper that it is but scurvily built. Mr. Steers is come to live in Mr. Melthorp's house, and 'tis thought the widow Melthorp will remove to Dublin. Nay, if you don't like this sort of news, I have no better, so go to your dukes and duchesses, and leave me to Goodman Bumford, and Patrick Dollan of Glanduggan.—Adieu.

n. d.

IF you write as you do, I shall come the seldomer, on purpose to be pleased with your letters, which I never look into without wondering how a brat who cannot read can possibly write so well. You are mistaken. Send me a letter without your hand on the outside, and I hold you a crown I shall not read it. But raillery apart ; I think it inconvenient for a hundred reasons, that I should make your house a sort of constant dwelling-place. I will certainly come as often as I conveniently can, but my health, and the perpetual run of ill-weather, hinders me from going out in the morning ; and my afternoons are taken up, I know not how, that I am in rebellion

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with a dozen people, beside yourself, for not seeing them. For the rest, you need make use of no other black art besides your ink. 'Tis a pity your eyes are not black, or I would have said the same of them : but you are a white witch, and can do no mischief. If you have employed any of your art on the black scarf, I defy it for one reason : Guess. Adieu,—for Dr. P. is come in to see me.

n. d.

I AM now writing on Wednesday night, when you are hardly settled at home, and it is the first hour of leisure I have had, and it may be Saturday before you have it, and then there will be Governor Huff, and/to make you more so, I here enclose a letter to poor Molkin, which I will command her not to shew you, because it is a love-letter. I reckon by this time, the groves and fields and purling streams have made Vanessa romantic, provided poor Molkin be well. Your friend¹ sent me the verses he promised, which I here transcribe.

Nymph, would you learn the only art,
To keep a worthy lover's heart ;
First to adorn your person well,
In utmost cleanliness excel :
And though you must the fashions take,
Observe them but for fashion's sake :
The strongest reason will submit
To virtue, honour, sense, and wit :
To such a nymph, the wise and good,
Cannot be faithless, if they would ;
For vices all have different ends,
But virtue still to virtue tends ;
And when your lover is not true,
'Tis virtue fails in him, or you :
And either he deserves disdain,
Or you without a cause complain ;
But here Vanessa cannot err,

¹ That is Swift himself, under the character of Cadenus.

SWIFT TO VANESSA

Nor are those rules applied to her :
For who could such a nymph forsake,
Except a blockhead, or a rake ;
Or how could she her heart bestow,
Except where wit and virtue grow ?

In my opinion, these lines are too grave, and therefore, may fit you, who, I fear, are in the spleen ; but that is not fit either for yourself, or the person you tend,¹ to whom you ought to read diverting things. Here is an epigram that concerns you not :

Dorinda dreams of dress a-bed,
'Tis all her thought and art ;
Her lace hath got within her head,
Her stays stick to her heart.

If you do not like these things, what must I say ? This town yields no better. The questions which you were used to ask me,² you may suppose to be all answered, just as they used to be after half-an-hour's debate ; "Entendez vous cela ?" You are to have a number of parsons in your neighbourhood, but not one that you love, for your age of loving parsons is not yet arrived. What this letter wants in length, it will have in difficulty, for I believe you cannot read it. I will write plainer to Molkin, because she is not much used to my hand. I hold a wager, there are some lines in this letter you will not understand, though you can read them ; so drink your coffee, and remember you are a desperate chip, and that the lady who calls you bastard, will be ready to answer all your questions. It is now Sunday night before I could finish this.

¹ Her sister, who was frequently ill.

² Often referred to—apparently a sort of catechism on his affections.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

n. d.

IF you knew how many little difficulties there are in sending letters to you, it would remove five parts in six of your quarrel ; but since you lay hold of my promises, and are so exact to the day, I shall promise you no more, and rather choose to be better than my word than worse. I am confident you came chiding into the world, and will continue so while you are in it. I was in great apprehension that poor Molkin was worse, and till I could be satisfied in that particular, I would not write again : but I little expected to have heard of your own ill health, and those who saw you since made no mention to me of it. I wonder what Molkin meant by shewing you my letter ; I will write to her no more, since she can keep secrets no better.

It was the first love-letter I have writ these dozen years, and since I have such ill success, I will write no more. Never was a *belle passion* so defeated, but the governor I hear is jealous, and upon your word you have a vast deal to say to me about it. Mind your nurse-keeping, do your duty, and leave off your huffing. One would imagine you were in love, by dating your letter August 29th, by which means I received it just a month before it was written. You do not find I answer your questions to your satisfaction : prove to me first that it was possible to answer anything to your satisfaction, so as that you would not grumble in half-an-hour. I am glad my writing puzzles you, for then your time will be employed in finding it out ; and I am sure it cost me a great many thoughts to make my letter difficult. Sure Glassheel is come over, and gave me a message from J[ohn] B[arber] about the money on the jewels, which

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I will answer. Molkin will be so glad to see Glassheel ; ay, Molkin ! Yesterday I was half-way towards you, where I dined, and returned weary enough. I asked where that road to the left led ? and they named the place. I wish your letters were as difficult as mine, for then they would be of no consequence if they were dropt by careless messengers. A stroke thus — signifies everything that may be said to *Cad*, at the beginning or conclusion. It is I who ought to be in a huff, that anything written by *Cad* should be difficult to *Skinage*. I must now leave off abruptly, for I intend to send this letter to-day, August 4.

LOUGHGALL, county of Armagh, July 13, 1722.

I HAVE received yours, and have changed places, so often since, that I could not assign a place where I might expect an answer from ; and if you be now in the country, and this letter does not reach you in the due time after the date, I shall not expect to hear from you, because I leave this place the beginning of August. I am well pleased with the account of your visit, and the behaviour of the ladies. I see every day as silly things among both sexes, and yet endure them for the sake of amusement. The worst thing in you and me is, that we are too hard to please ; and whether we have not made ourselves so, is the question ; at least I believe we have the same reason. One thing that I differ from you in, is that I do not quarrel with my best friends. I believe you have ten angry passages in your letter, and every one of them enough to spoil two days a-piece of riding and walking. We differ prodigiously in one point,—I fly from the spleen to the world's end ; you run out of your way to meet it. I

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doubt the bad weather has hindered you much from the diversions of your country-house, and put you upon thinking in your chamber.

The use I have made of it was to read I know not how many diverting books of history and travels. I wish you would get yourself a horse, and have always two servants to attend you, and visit your neighbours,—the worse the better. There is a pleasure in being revered, and that is always in your power, by your superiority of sense, and an easy fortune. The best maxim I know in life is, to drink your coffee when you can, and when you cannot, to be easy without it; while you continue to be splenetic, count upon it, I will always preach. Thus much I sympathise with you, that I am not cheerful enough to write, for, I believe, coffee once a week is necessary to that. I can sincerely answer all your questions, as I used to do, but then I gave all possible way to amusements, because they preserve my temper, as exercise does my health; and without health and good humour I had rather be a dog. I have shifted scenes oftener than I ever did in my life, and I believe have lain in thirty beds since I left the town;—I always drew up the clothes with my left hand, which is a superstition I have learnt these ten years. These country posts are always so capricious, that we are forced to send our letters at a call on a sudden, and mine is now demanded, though it goes not out till to-morrow. Be cheerful, and read, and write, and laugh, as Cad—used to advise you long ago. I hope your affairs are in some better settlement. I long to see you in figure and equipage: pray do not lose that taste. Farewell.

SWIFT TO VARINA

TO VARINA.

(Jane, sister to Mr. Waryng, Swift's chamberfellow at college.)

April 29, 1696.

MADAM,

IMPATIENCE is the most inseparable quality of a lover, and indeed of every person who is in pursuit of a design whereon he conceives his greatest happiness or misery to depend. It is the same thing in war, in courts, and in common business. Every one who hunts after pleasure, or fame, or fortune, is still restless and uneasy till he has hunted down his game; and all this is not only very natural, but something reasonable too; for a violent desire is little better than a distemper, and therefore men are not to blame in looking after a cure. I find myself hugely infected with this malady, and am easily vain enough to believe it has some very good reasons to excuse it. For, indeed, in my case there are some circumstances which will admit pardon for more than ordinary disquiets. That dearest object upon which all my prospect of happiness entirely depends, is in perpetual danger to be removed for ever from my sight. Varina's life is daily wasting; and though one just and honourable action would furnish health to her, and unspeakable happiness to us both, yet some power that repines at human felicity has that influence to hold her continually doating upon her cruelty, and me on the cause of it. This fully convinces me of what we are told, that the miseries of man's life are all beaten out on his own anvil. Why was I so foolish to put my hopes and fears into the power or management of another? Liberty is doubtless the most valuable blessing of life; yet we are

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fond to fling it away on those who have been these 5000 years using us ill. Philosophy advises to keep our desires and prospects of happiness as much as we can in our own breasts, and independent of anything without. He that sends them abroad is likely to have as little quiet as a merchant whose stock depends upon winds, and waves, and pirates, or upon the words and faith of creditors, every whit as dangerous and inconstant as the other.

I am a villain if I have not been poring this half hour over the paper, merely for want of something to say to you:—or is it rather that I have so much to say to you, that I know not where to begin, though at last 'tis all very likely to be arrant repetition?

Two strangers, a poet and a beggar, went to cuffs yesterday in this town, which minded me to curse heartily both employments. However I am glad to see those two trades fall out, because I always heard they had been constant cronies: but what was best of all, the poet got the better, and kicked the gentleman beggar out of doors. This was of great comfort to me, till I heard the victor himself was a most abominable bad rhymers, and as mere a vagabond beggar as the other, which is a very great offence to me; for starving is much too honourable for a block-head. I read some of his verses printed in praise of my Lady Donegal, by which he has plainly proved that Fortune has injured him, and that he is dunce enough to be worth five thousand pounds a year. It is a pity he has not also the qualifications to recommend himself to your sex. I dare engage no ladies will hold him long in suspense with their unkindness: one settlement of separate maintenance, well en-

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grossed, would have more charms than all the wit or passion of a thousand letters. And I will maintain it, any man had better have a poor angel to his rival, than the devil himself if he was rich.

You have now had time enough to consider my last letter, and to form your own resolutions upon it. I wait your answer with a world of impatience ; and if you think fit I should attend you before my journey, I am ready to do it. My Lady Donegal tells me that it is feared my Lord Deputy will not live many days ; and if that be so, it is possible I may take shipping from hence, otherwise I shall set out on Monday fortnight for Dublin, and, after one visit of leave to his excellency, hasten to England : and how far you will stretch the point of your unreasonable scruples to keep me here, will depend upon the strength of the love you pretend for me. In short, madam, I am once more offered the advantage to have the same acquaintance with greatness that I formerly enjoyed, and with better prospect of interest. I here solemnly offer to forego it all for your sake. I desire nothing of your fortune ; you shall live where and with whom you please till my affairs are settled to your desire : and in the meantime I will push my advancement with all the eagerness and courage imaginable, and do not doubt to succeed.

Study seven years for objections against all this, and by Heaven they will at last be no more than trifles and put-offs. It is true you have known sickness longer than you have me, and therefore perhaps you are more loth to part with it as an older acquaintance : but listen to what I here solemnly protest, by all that can be witness to an oath, that

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if I leave this kingdom before you are mine, I will endure the utmost indignities of fortune rather than ever return again, though the king would send me back his deputy. And if it must be so, preserve yourself, in God's name, for the next lover who has those qualities you love so much beyond any of mine, and who will highly admire you for those advantages which shall never share any esteem from me. Would to Heaven you were but a little sensible of the thoughts into which my present distractions plunge me; they hale me a thousand ways, and I not able to bear them. It is so, by Heaven! The love of Varina is of more tragical consequence than her cruelty. Would to God you had treated and scorned me from the beginning! It was your pity opened the first way to my misfortune; and now your love is finishing my ruin: and is it so then? In one fortnight I must take eternal farewell of Varina; and (I wonder) will she weep at parting, a little to justify her poor pretences of some affection to me? and will my friends still continue reproaching me for the want of gallantry, and neglecting a close siege? How comes it that they all wish us married together, they knowing my circumstances and yours extremely well, and I am sure love you too much, if it be only for my sake, to wish you anything that might cross your interest or your happiness?

Surely, Varina, you have but a very mean opinion of the joys that accompany a true, honourable, unlimited love; yet either nature and our ancestors have highly deceived us, or else all other sublunary things are dross in comparison. Is it possible you can be yet insensible to the prospect of a rapture and delight so innocent and so exalted? Trust me,

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Varina, Heaven has given us nothing else worth the loss of a thought. Ambition, high appearances, friends, and fortune, are all tasteless and insipid when they come in competition; yet millions of such glorious minutes are we perpetually losing, for ever losing, irrecoverably losing, to gratify empty forms and wrong notions, and affected coldnesses and peevish humour. These are the unhappy encumbrances which we who are distinguished from the vulgar do fondly create to torment ourselves. The only felicity permitted to human life we clog with tedious circumstances and barbarous formality. By Heaven, Varina, you are more experienced, and have less virgin innocence than I. Would not your conduct make one think you were hugely skilled in all the little politic methods of intrigue? Love, with the gall of too much discretion, is a thousand times worse than with none at all. It is a peculiar part of nature which art debauches, but cannot improve. We have all of us the seeds of it implanted in ourselves, and they require no help from courts or fortune to cultivate and improve them. To resist the violence of our inclinations in the beginning, is a strain of self-denial that may have some pretences to set up for a virtue: but when they are grounded at first upon reason, when they have taken firm root and grown up to a height, 'tis folly—folly as well as injustice, to withstand their dictates; for this passion has a property peculiar to itself, to be most commendable in its extremes; and 'tis as possible to err in the excess of piety as of love.

These are the rules I have long followed with you, Varina; and had you pleased to imitate them, we should both have been infinitely happy. The little

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disguises, and affected contradictions of your sex, were all (to say the truth) infinitely beneath persons of your pride and mine ; paltry maxims that they are, calculated for the rabble of humanity. O Varina, how imagination leads me beyond myself and all my sorrows ! It is sunk, and a thousand graves lie open ! No, madam, I will give you no more of my unhappy temper, through I derive it all from you.

Farewell, madam ; and may love make you a while forget your temper to do me justice. Only remember, that if you still refuse to be mine, you will quickly lose, for ever lose, him that has resolved to die as he has lived, all yours.

JON. SWIFT.

I have here sent you Mr. Fletcher's letter, wherein I hope I do not injure generosity or break trust, since the contents are purely my own concern. If you will pardon the ill hand and spelling, the reason and sense of it you will find very well and proper.

DUBLIN, May 4, 1700.

MADAM,

I AM extremely concerned at the account you give of your health ; for my uncle told me he found you in appearance better than you had been in some years, and I was in hopes you had still continued so. God forbid I should ever be the occasion of creating more troubles to you, as you seem to intimate ! The letter you desired me to answer I have frequently read, and thought I had replied to every part of it that required it ; however, since you are pleased to repeat those particulars wherein you desire satisfaction, I shall endeavour to give it you as well as I am

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able. You would know what gave my temper that sudden turn, as to alter the style of my letters since I last came over. If there has been that alteration you observe, I have told you the cause abundance of times. I had used a thousand endeavours and arguments, to get you from the company and place you are in ; both on the account of your health and humour, which I thought were like to suffer very much in such an air, and before such examples. All I had in answer from you, was nothing but a great deal of arguing, and sometimes in a style so very imperious as I thought might have been spared, when I reflected how much you had been in the wrong. The other thing you would know is, whether this change of style be owing to the thoughts of a new mistress. I declare, upon the word of a Christian and a gentleman, it is not ; neither had I ever thoughts of being married to any other person but yourself. I had ever an opinion that you had a great sweetness of nature and humour ; and whatever appeared to the contrary, I looked upon it only as a thing put on as necessary before a lover : but I have since observed in abundance of your letters, such marks of a severe indifference, that I began to think it was hardly possible for one of my few good qualities to please you. I never knew any so hard to be worked upon, even in matters where the interest and concern are entirely your own ; all which, I say, passed easily while we were in the state of formalities and ceremony ; but, since that, there is no other way of accounting for this untractable behaviour in you, but by imputing it to a want of common esteem and friendship for me.

When I desired an account of your fortune, I had

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no such design as you pretend to imagine. I have told you many a time, that in England it was in the power of any young fellow of common sense to get a larger fortune than ever you pretended to: I asked, in order to consider whether it were sufficient, with the help of my poor income, to make one of your humour easy, in a married state. I think it comes to almost a hundred pounds a-year; and I think, at the same time, that no young woman in the world of the same income would dwindle away her health and life in such a sink, and among such family conversation: neither have all your letters been once able to persuade that you have the least value for me, because you so little regarded what I so often said upon that matter. The dismal account you say I have given you of my livings I can assure you to be a true one; and, since it is a dismal one even in your own opinion, you can best draw consequences from it. The place where Dr. Bolton lived is upon a living which he keeps with the deanery; but the place of residence for that they have given me is within a mile of a town called Trim, twenty miles from hence; and there is no other way but to hire a house at Trim, or build one on the spot; the first is hardly to be done, and the other I am too poor to perform at present. For coming down to Belfast, it is what I cannot yet think of, my attendance is so close, and so much required of me; but our government sits very loose and I believe will change in a few months; whether our part will partake in the change, I know not, though I am very apt to believe it; and then I shall be at leisure for a short journey. But I hope your other friends, more powerful than I, will, before that time, persuade you from the place where you are. I

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desire my service to your mother, in return for her remembrance; but for any other dealings that way, I entreat your pardon; and I think I have more cause to resent your desires of me in that case, than you have to be angry at my refusals. If you like such company and conduct, much good do you with them! My education has been otherwise. My uncle Adam asked me one day in private, as by direction, what my designs were in relation to you, because it might be a hinderance to you, if I did not proceed. The answer I gave him (which I suppose he has sent you) was to this effect: "That I hoped I was no hinderance to you; because the reason you urged against an union with me, was drawn from your indisposition, which still continued; that you also thought my fortune not sufficient, which is neither at present in a condition to offer you: That, if your health and my fortune were as they ought, I would prefer you above all your sex; but that, in the present condition of both, I thought it was against your opinion, and would certainly make you unhappy: That, had you any other offers which your friends or yourself thought more to your advantage, I should think I were very unjust to be an obstacle in your way." Now for what concerns my fortune, you have answered it. I desire, therefore, you will let me know if your health be otherwise than it was when you told me the doctors advised you against marriage as what would certainly hazard your life. Are they or you grown of another opinion in this particular? are you in a condition to manage domestic affairs, with an income of less (perhaps) than three hundred pounds a-year? have you such an inclination to my person and humour, as to comply with my desires and way of living, and

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endeavour to make us both as happy as you can? will you be ready to engage in those methods I shall direct for the improvement of your mind, so as to make us entertaining company for each other, without being miserable when we are neither visiting nor visited? can you bend your love and esteem and indifference to others the same way as I do mine? shall I have so much power in your heart, or you so much government of your passions, as to grow in good humour upon my approach, though provoked by a —? have you so much good-nature as to endeavour by soft words to smooth any rugged humour occasioned by the cross accidents of life? shall the place wherever your husband is thrown, be more welcome than courts or cities without him? In short, these are some of the necessary methods to please men, who, like me, are deep-read in the world; and to a person thus made, I should be proud in giving all due returns towards making her happy. These are the questions I have always resolved to propose to her with whom I meant to pass my life: and whenever you can heartily answer them in the affirmative, I shall be blessed to have you in my arms, without regarding whether your person be beautiful, or your fortune large. Cleanliness in the first, and competency in the other, is all I look for. I desire, indeed, a plentiful revenue, but would rather it should be of my own: though I should bear from a wife to be reproached for the greatest.

I have said all I can possibly say in answer to any part of your letter, and in telling you my clear opinion as to matters between us. I singled you out at first from the rest of women: and I expect not to be used like a common lover. When you think fit to

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send me an answer to this without —, I shall then approve myself, by all means you shall command, Madam,

Your most obedient humble servant,

JON. SWIFT.

TO POPE.

August 30, 1716.

I HAD the favour of yours by Mr. Ford, of whom, before any other question relating to your health or fortune, or success as a poet, I inquired your principles in the common form, "Is he a Whig or a Tory?" I am sorry to find they are not so well tallied to the present juncture as I could wish. I always thought the terms of *facto* and *jure* had been introduced by the poets, and that possession of any sort in kings was held an unexceptionable title in the court of Parnassus. If you do not grow a perfect good subject in all its present latitudes, I shall conclude you are become rich, and able to live without dedications to men in power, whereby one great inconvenience will follow, that you and the world and posterity will be utterly ignorant of their virtues. For, either your brethren have miserably deceived us these hundred years past; or power confers virtue, as naturally as five of your Popish sacraments do grace.—You sleep less, and drink more.—But your master Horace was *vini somnique benignus*: and, as I take it, both are proper for your trade. As to wine, there are a thousand poetical texts to confirm the one; and as to the other, I know it was anciently the custom to sleep in temples for those who would consult the oracles, "Who dictates to me slumbering," &c.

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You are an ill Catholic, or a worse geographer ; for I can assure you, Ireland is not Paradise, and I appeal even to any Spanish divine, whether addresses were ever made to a friend in Hell or Purgatory. And who are all those enemies you hint at ? I can only think of Curll, Gildon, 'Squire Burnet, Blackmore, and a few others, whose fame I have forgot : tools, in my opinion, as necessary for a good writer, as pen, ink, and paper. And besides, I would fain know whether every draper does not shew you three or four damned pieces of stuff to set off his good one ? However, I will grant that one thorough bookselling rogue is better qualified to vex an author, than all his contemporary scribblers in critic or satire, not only by stolen copies of what was incorrect or unfit for the public, but by downright laying other men's dulness at your door. I had a long design upon the ears of that Curll, when I was in credit ; but the rogue would never allow me a fair stroke at them, although my pen-knife was ready drawn and sharp. I can hardly believe the relation of his being poisoned, although the historian pretends to have been an eye-witness ; but I beg pardon, sack might do it, although ratsbane would not. I never saw the thing you mention as falsely imputed to you ; but I think the frolics of merry hours, even when we are guilty, should not be left to the mercy of our best friends, until Curll and his resemblers are hanged.

With submission to the better judgment of you and your friends, I take your project of an employment under Langallerie to be idle and unnecessary. Have a little patience, and you will find more merit and encouragement at home, by the same methods. You are ungrateful to your country ; quit but your own religion, and ridicule ours, and that will allow you a

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free choice for any other, or for none at all, and pay you well into the bargain. Therefore pray do not run and disgrace us among the Turks, by telling them you were forced to leave your native home, because we would oblige you to be a Christian ; whereas we will make it appear to all the world, that we only compelled you to be a Whig.

There is a young ingenious Quaker¹ in this town, who writes verses to his mistress, not very correct, but in a strain purely what a poetical Quaker should do, commending her look and habit, &c. It gave me a hint that a set of quaker pastorals might succeed, if our friend Gay could fancy it, and I think it a fruitful subject ; pray hear what he says. I believe farther, the pastoral ridicule is not exhausted : and that a porter, footman, or chairman's pastoral might do well. Or what think you of a Newgate pastoral, among the whores and thieves there ?

Lastly, to conclude, I love you never the worse for seldom writing to you. I am in an obscure scene, where you know neither thing nor person. I can only answer yours, which I promise to do after a sort, whenever you think proper to employ me. But I can assure you, the scene and the times have depressed me wonderfully, for I will impute no defect to those two paltry years which have slipped by since I had the happiness to see you. I am, with the truest esteem,

Yours, &c.

September 29, 1725.

I AM now returning to the noble scene of Dublin, into the *grande monde*, for fear of burying my parts,

¹ George Rooke, linen-draper.

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to signalize myself among curates and vicars, and correct all corruptions crept in, relating to the weight of bread and butter, through those dominions where I govern. I have employed my time (beside ditching) in finishing, correcting, amending, and transcribing my travels,¹ in four parts complete, newly augmented, and intended for the press, when the world shall deserve them, or rather when a printer shall be found brave enough to venture his ears. I like the scheme of our meeting after distresses and dispersions, but the chief end I propose to myself in all my labours is, to vex the world rather than divert it; and if I could compass that design, without hurting my own person or fortune, I would be the most indefatigable writer you have ever seen, without reading. I am exceedingly pleased that you have done with translations: Lord-treasurer Oxford often lamented that a rascally world should lay you under a necessity of misemploying your genius for so long a time. But since you will now be so much better employed, when you think of the world give it one lash the more, at my request. I have ever hated all nations, professions, and communities; and all my love is toward individuals; for instance, I hate the tribe of lawyers, but I love Counsellor Such-a-one, and Judge Such-a-one: It is so with physicians, (I will not speak of my own trade,) soldiers, English, Scotch, French, and the rest. But principally I hate and detest that animal called man; although I heartily love John, Peter, Thomas, and so forth. This is the system upon which I have governed myself many years, (but do not tell;) and so I shall go on till I have done with them. I have got materials toward a treatise, proving the falsity of

¹ Those of Gulliver.

SWIFT TO POPE

that definition *animal rationale*, and to show it should be only *rationis capax*. Upon this great foundation of misanthropy, (though not in Timon's manner,) the whole building of my travels is erected; and I never will have peace of mind till all honest men are of my opinion: by consequence you are to embrace it immediately, and procure that all who deserve my esteem may do so too. The matter is so clear that it will admit of no dispute; nay, I will hold a hundred pounds that you and I agree in the point.

I did not know your *Odyssey* was finished, being yet in the country, which I shall leave in three days. I thank you kindly for the present, but shall like it three-fourths the less, from the mixture you mention of other hands; however, I am glad you saved yourself so much drudgery.—I have been long told by Mr. Ford of your great achievements in building and planting, and especially of your subterranean passage to your garden, whereby you turned a blunder into a beauty, which is a piece of *Ars Poetica*.

I have almost done with haridans, and shall soon become old enough to fall in love with girls of fourteen. The lady¹ whom you describe to live at court, to be deaf, and no party-woman, I take to be mythology, but know not how to moralize it. She cannot be Mercy, for Mercy is neither deaf, nor lives at court: Justice is blind, and perhaps deaf, but neither is she a court lady: Fortune is both blind and deaf, and a court lady, but then she is a most damnable party-woman, and will never make me easy, as you promise. It must be Riches, which answers all your description: I am glad she visits you, but my voice is so weak that I doubt she will never hear me.

¹ Mrs. Howard.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

Mr. Lewis sent me an account of Dr. Arbuthnot's illness, which is a very sensible affliction to me, who, by living so long out of the world, have lost that hardness of heart contracted by years and general conversation. I am daily losing friends, and neither seeking nor getting others. O if the world had but a dozen Arbuthnots in it, I would burn my travels: but, however, he is not without fault: there is a passage in Bede highly commending the piety and learning of the Irish in that age, where, after abundance of praises, he overthrows them all, by lamenting that, alas! they kept Easter at a wrong time of the year. So our doctor has every quality and virtue that can make a man amiable or useful; but, alas! he hath a sort of slouch in his walk! I pray God protect him, for he is an excellent Christian, though not a Catholic.

I hear nothing of our friend Gay, but I find the court keeps him at hard meat. I advised him to come over here with a lord-lieutenant. Philips writes little flams (as Lord Leicester called those sort of verses) on Miss Carteret. A Dublin blacksmith, a great poet, has imitated his manner in a poem to the same miss. Philips is a complainer, and on this occasion I told Lord Carteret that complainers never succeed at court, though railers do.

Are you altogether a country gentleman, that I must address to you out of London, to the hazard of your losing this precious letter, which I will now conclude, although so much paper is left. I have an ill name, and therefore shall not subscribe it, but you will guess it comes from one who esteems and loves you about half as much as you deserve, I mean as much as he can.

SWIFT TO POPE

I am in great concern, at what I am just told is in some of the newspapers, that Lord Bolingbroke is much hurt by a fall in hunting. I am glad he has so much youth and vigour left (of which he has not been thrifty), but I wonder he has no more discretion.

November 26, 1725.

I SHOULD sooner have acknowledged yours, if a feverish disorder and the relics of it had not disabled me for a fortnight. I now begin to make excuses, because I hope I am pretty near seeing you, and therefore I would cultivate an acquaintance ; because if you do not know me when we meet, you need only keep one of my letters, and compare it with my face, for my face and letters are counterparts of my heart. I fear I have not expressed that right, but I mean well, and I hate blots : I look in your letter, and, in my conscience, you say the same thing but in a better manner. Pray tell my Lord Bolingbroke that I wish he were banished again, for then I should hear from him, when he was full of philosophy, and talked *de contemptu mundi*. My Lord Oxford was so extremely kind as to write to me immediately an account of his son's birth ; which I immediately acknowledged, but before the letter could reach him, I wished it in the sea ; I hope I was more afflicted than his lordship. It is hard that parsons and beggars should be overrun with brats, while so great and good a family wants an heir to continue it. I have received his father's picture, but I lament (*sub sigillo confessionis*) that it is not so true a resemblance as I could wish. Drown the world ! I am not content with despising it, but I would anger it, if I could with safety. I wish there were an hospital built for its despisers, where one

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might act with safety, and it need not be a large building, only I would have it well endowed. P[hilips] is *fort chancelant* whether he shall turn parson or no. But all employments here are engaged, or in reversion. Cast wits and cast beaux have a proper sanctuary in the church ; yet we think it a severe judgment, that a fine gentleman, and so much the finer for hating ecclesiastics, should be a domestic humble retainer to an Irish prelate. He is neither secretary nor gentleman-usher, yet serves in both capacities. He has published several reasons why he never came to see me, but the best is, that I have not waited on his lordship. We have had a poem sent from London in imitation of that on Miss Carteret. It is on Miss Harvey of a day old ; we say and think it is yours. I wish it were not, because I am against monopolies. You might have spared me a few more lines of your satire, but I hope in a few months to see it all. To hear boys like you talk of millenniums and tranquillity ! I am older by thirty years, Lord Bolingbroke by twenty, and you but by ten, than when we last were together : and we should differ more than ever, you coquetting a maid of honour, my lord looking on to see how the gamesters play, and I railing at you both. I desire you and all my friends will take a special care that my disaffection to the world may not be imputed to my age, for I have credible witnesses ready to depose, that it hath never varied from the twenty-first to the f—ty-eighth year of my life, (pray fill that blank charitably.) I tell you, after all, that I do not hate mankind, it is *vous autres* who hate them, because you would have them reasonable animals, and are angry at being disappointed : I have always rejected that definition, and made another

SWIFT TO POPE

of my own. I am no more angry with ——— than I was with the kite that last week flew away with one of my chickens ; and yet I was pleased when one of my servants shot him two days after. This I say, because you are so hardy as to tell me of your intentions to write maxims in opposition to Rochefoucault, who is my favourite, because I found my whole character in him ; however, I will read him again, because it is possible I may have since undergone some alterations. Take care the bad poets do not outwit you, as they have served the good ones in every age, whom they have provoked to transmit their names to posterity. Mævius is as well known as Virgil, and Gildon will be as well known as you, if his name gets into your verses : and as to the difference between good and bad fame, it is a perfect trifle. I ask a thousand pardons, and so leave you for this time, and I will write again without concerning myself whether you write or not.

I am, etc.

JON. SWIFT.

DUBLIN, February 13, 1728-9.

I LIVED very easily in the country : Sir Arthur is a man of sense, and a scholar, has a good voice, and my lady a better ; she is perfectly well bred and desirous to improve her understanding, which is very good, but cultivated too much like a fine lady. She was my pupil there, and severely chid, when she read wrong ; with that, and walking, and making twenty little amusing improvements, and writing family verses of mirth by way of libels on my lady, my time passed very well, and in very great order ;

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infinitely better than here, where I see no creature but my servants and my old presbyterian house-keeper, denying myself to everybody, till I shall recover my ears.

The account of another lord-lieutenant was only in a common newspaper, when I was in the country ; and if it should have happened to be true, I would have desired to have had access to him as the situation I am in requires. But this renews the grief for the death of our friend Mr. Congreve, whom I loved from my youth, and who surely, beside his other talents, was a very agreeable companion. He had the misfortune to squander away a very good constitution in his younger days ; and I think a man of sense and merit like him, is bound in conscience to preserve his health for the sake of his friends, as well as of himself. Upon his own account I could not much desire the continuance of his life, under so much pain, and so many infirmities. Years have not yet hardened me : and I have an addition of weight on my spirits since we lost him ; though I saw him so seldom, and possibly if he had lived on, should never have seen him more. I do not only wish as you ask me, that I was unacquainted with any deserving person, but almost, that I never had a friend. Here is an ingenious good-humoured physician, a fine gentleman, an excellent scholar, easy in his fortunes, kind to everybody, has abundance of friends, entertains them often and liberally ; they pass the evening with him at cards, with plenty of good meat and wine, eight or a dozen together ; he loves them all, and they him ; he has twenty of these at command ; if one of them dies, it is no more . than poor Tom ; he gets another, or takes up with

SWIFT TO POPE

the rest, and is no more moved than at a loss of his cat ; he offends nobody, is easy with everybody—is not this the truly happy man ? I was describing him to my Lady A[cheson], who knows him too, but she hates him mortally by my character, and will not drink his health : I would give half my fortune for the same temper, and yet I cannot say I love it, for I do not love my Lord —, who is much of the doctor's nature. I hear Mr. Gay's second opera which you mentioned, is forbid ; and then he will be once more fit to be advised, and reject your advice. Adieu.

JON. SWIFT.

DUBLIN, Jan. 1732-3.

I RECEIVED yours with a few lines from the Doctor,¹ and the account of our losing Mr. Gay, upon which event I shall say nothing. I am only concerned that long living has not hardened me ; for even in this kingdom, and in a few days past, two persons of great merit, whom I loved very well, have died in the prime of their years, but a little above thirty. I would endeavour to comfort myself upon the loss of friends as I do upon the loss of money ; by turning to my account-book, and seeing whether I have enough left for my support ; but in the former case I find I have not any more than in the other ; and know not any man who is in a greater likelihood than myself to die poor and friendless. You are a much greater loser than I by his death, as being a more intimate friend, and often his companion ; which latter I could never hope to be, except perhaps once

¹ Arbuthnot.

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more in my life for a piece of a summer. I hope he has left you the care of any writings he may have left, and I wish that, with those already extant, they could all be published in a fair edition, under your inspection. Your poem on the Use of Riches has been just printed here, and we have no objection but the obscurity of several passages by our ignorance in facts and persons, which makes us lose abundance of the satire. Had the printer given me notice, I would have honestly printed the names at length, where I happened to know them ; and writ explanatory notes, which, however, would have been but few, for my long absence has made me ignorant of what passes out of the scene where I am. I never had the least hint from you about this work, any more than of your former, upon Taste. We are told here, that you are preparing other pieces of the same bulk to be inscribed to other friends, one (for instance) to my Lord Bolingbroke, another to Lord Oxford, and so on. Dr. Delany presents you his most humble service ; he behaves himself very commendably, converses only with his former friends, makes no parade, but entertains them constantly at an elegant, plentiful table, walks the streets, as usual, by daylight, does many acts of charity and generosity, cultivates a country-house two miles distant ; and is one of those very few within my knowledge, on whom a great access of fortune hath made no manner of change. And particularly, he is often without money, as he was before. We have got my Lord Orrery among us, being forced to continue here on the ill condition of his estate by the knavery of an agent ; he is a most worthy gentleman, whom I hope you will be acquainted with. I am very much obliged by your

SWIFT TO GAY

favour to Mr. P[ilkington], which I desire may continue no longer than he shall deserve by his modesty, a virtue I never knew him to want, but is hard for young men to keep, without abundance of ballast. If you are acquainted with the Duchess of Queensberry, I desire you will present her my most humble service; I think she is a greater loser by the death of a friend than either of us. She seems a lady of excellent sense and spirits. I had often postscripts from her in our friend's letters to me, and her part was sometimes longer than his, and they made up a great part of the little happiness I could have here. This was the more generous, because I never saw her since she was a girl of five years old, nor did I envy poor Mr. Gay for anything so much as being a domestic friend to such a lady. I desire you will never fail to send me a particular account of your health. I dare hardly inquire about Mrs. Pope, who I am told is but just among the living, and consequently a continual grief to you; she is sensible of your tenderness, which robs her of the only happiness she is capable of enjoying. And yet I pity you more than her; you cannot lengthen her days, and I beg she may not shorten yours.

JON. SWIFT.

TO GAY.

DUBLIN, Jan. 8, 1722-3.

COMING home after a short Christmas ramble, I found a letter upon my table, and little expected when I opened it to read your name at the bottom. The best and greatest part of my life, until these last eight years, I spent in England; there I made

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

my friendships, and there I left my desires. I am condemned for ever to another country ; what is in prudence to be done ? I think to be *oblitusque meorum, obliviscendus et illis*. What can be the design of your letter but malice, to wake me out of a scurvy sleep, which, however, is better than none ! I am towards nine years older since I left you, yet that is the least of my alterations ; my business, my diversions, my conversations, are all entirely changed for the worse, and so are my studies and my amusements in writing ; yet, after all, this humdrum way of life might be passable enough, if you would let me alone. I shall not be able to relish my wine, my parsons, my horses, nor my garden, for three months, until the spirit you have raised shall be dispossessed. I have sometimes wondered that I have not visited you, but I have been stopped by too many reasons, besides years and laziness, and yet these are very good ones. Upon my return, after half-a-year among you, there would be to me *desiderio nec pudor nec modus*. I was three years reconciling myself to the scene, and the business, to which fortune had condemned me, and stupidity was what I had recourse to. Besides, what a figure should I make in London, while my friends are in poverty, exile, distress, or imprisonment, and my enemies with rods of iron ? Yet I often threatened myself with the journey, and am every summer practising to ride and get health to bear it : the only inconvenience is, that I grow old in the experiment. Although I care not to talk to you as a divine, yet I hope you have not been author of your colic : do you drink bad wine, or keep bad company ? Are you not as many years older as I ? It will not be always *et tibi quos*

SWIFT TO GAY

mihi dempserit apponet annos. I am heartily sorry you have any dealings with that ugly distemper, and I believe our friend Arbuthnot will recommend you to temperance and exercise. I wish they could have as good an effect upon the giddiness I am subject to, and which this moment I am not free from. I should have been glad if you had lengthened your letter, by telling me the present condition of many of my old acquaintance, Congreve, Arbuthnot, Lewis, etc., but you mention only Mr. Pope, who, I believe, is lazy, or else he might have added three lines of his own. I am extremely glad he is not in your case of needing great men's favour, and could heartily wish that you were in his. I have been considering why poets have such ill success in making their court, since they are allowed to be the greatest and best of all flatterers: the defect is, that they flatter only in print or in writing, but not by word of mouth: they will give things under their hand which they make a conscience of speaking. Besides, they are too libertine to haunt antichambers, too poor to bribe porters and footmen, and too proud to cringe to second-hand favourites in a great family. Tell me, are you not under original sin by the dedication of your Eclogues to Lord Bolingbroke? I am an ill judge at this distance; and besides, am, for my ease, utterly ignorant of the commonest things that pass in the world; but if all courts have a sameness in them (as the parsons phrase it), things may be as they were in my time, when all employments went to parliament-men's friends, who had been useful in elections, and there was always a huge list of names in arrears at the treasury, which would at least take up your seven years' expedient to discharge even one half. I am of

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opinion, if you will not be offended, that the surest course would be, to get your friend who lodgeth in your house to recommend you to the next chief governor who comes over here, for a good civil employment, or to be one of his secretaries, which your parliament-men are fond enough of, when there is no room at home. The wine is good and reasonable; you may dine twice a-week at the deanery-house; there is a set of company in this town sufficient for one man; folks will admire you, because they have read you, and read of you; and a good employment will make you live tolerably in London, or sumptuously here; or, if you divide between both places, it will be for your health.

I wish I could do more than say I love you. I left you in a good way, both for the late court and the successors; and, by the force of too much honesty, or too little sublunary wisdom, you fell between two stools. Take care of your health and money; be less modest and more active; or else turn parson, and get a bishopric here. Would to God they would send us as good ones from your side! I am ever, etc.

JON. SWIFT.

DUBLIN, Nov. 10, 1730.

WHEN my Lord Peterborough, in the queen's time, went abroad upon his embassies, the ministry told me, that he was such a vagrant, they were forced to write at him by guess, because they knew not where to write to him. This is my case with you; sometimes in Scotland, sometimes at Hamwalks, sometimes God knows where. You are a man of business, and not at leisure for insignificant correspondence. It was I got you the employment of

SWIFT TO GAY

being my lord duke's *premier ministre* : for his grace having heard how good a manager you were of my revenue, thought you fit to be entrusted with ten talents. I have had twenty times a strong inclination to spend a summer near Salisbury Downs, having rid over them more than once, and with a young parson of Salisbury reckoned twice the stones of Stonehenge, which are either ninety-two or ninety-three. I desire to present my most humble acknowledgments to my lady duchess in return of her civility. I hear an ill thing, that she is *matre pulchra filia pulchrior* : I never saw her since she was a girl, and would be angry she should excel her mother, who was long my principal goddess. I desire you will tell her grace, that the ill management of forks is not to be helped when they are only bidental, which happens in all poor houses, especially those of poets ; upon which account a knife was absolutely necessary at Mr. Pope's, where it was morally impossible, with a bidental fork, to convey a morsel of beef, with the incumbrance of mustard and turnips, into your mouth at once. And her grace hath cost me thirty pounds to provide tridents for fear of offending her, which sum I desire she will please to return me. I am sick enough to go to the Bath, but have not heard it will be good for my disorder. I have a strong mind to spend my two hundred pounds next summer in France : I am glad I have it, for there is hardly twice that sum left in this kingdom. You want no settlement, (I call the family where you live, and the foot you are upon, a settlement,) till you increase your fortune to what will support you with ease and plenty, a good house and a garden. The want of this I much dread for you : for I have often known a she-cousin of a good family

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

and small fortune, passing months among all her relations, living in plenty, and taking her circles, till she grew an old maid, and everybody weary of her. Mr. Pope complains of seldom seeing you: but the evil is unavoidable, for different circumstances of life have always separated those whom friendship will join: God hath taken care of this, to prevent any progress toward real happiness here, which would make life more desirable, and death too dreadful. I hope you have now one advantage that you always wanted before, and the want of which made your friends as uneasy as it did yourself: I mean the removal of that solicitude about your own affairs, which perpetually filled your thoughts, and disturbed your conversation. For if it be true what Mr. Pope seriously tells me, you will have opportunity of saving every groat of the interest you receive; and so by the time he and you grow weary of each other, you will be able to pass the rest of your wineless life in ease and plenty; with the additional triumphal comfort of never having received a penny from those tasteless ungrateful people from whom you deserved so much, and who deserve no better geniuses than those by whom they are celebrated. If you see Mr. Cæsar, present my humble service to him, and let him know that the scrub libel printed against me here, and reprinted in London, for which he showed a kind concern to a friend of us both, was written by myself, and sent to a Whig printer; it was in the style and genius of such scoundrels, when the humour of libelling ran in this strain against a friend of mine whom you know. But my paper is ended.

JON. SWIFT.

SWIFT TO GAY

DUBLIN, April 13, 1731.

YOUR situation is an odd one; the duchess is your treasurer, and Mr. Pope tells me you are the duke's. And I had gone a good way in some verses on that occasion, prescribing lessons to direct your conduct, in a negative way, not to do so and so, &c., like other treasurers; how to deal with servants, tenants, or neighbouring squires, which I take to be courtiers, parliaments, and princes in alliance, and so the parallel goes on, but grows too long to please me: I prove that poets are the fittest persons to be treasurers and managers to great persons, from their virtue and contempt of money, &c.—Pray, why did you not get a new heel to your shoe, unless you would make your court at St. James's by affecting to imitate the Prince of Lilliput.—But the rest of your letter being wholly taken up in a very bad character of the duchess, I shall say no more to you, but apply myself to her grace.

MADAM (*The Duchess of Queensberry*),

SINCE Mr. Gay affirms that you love to have your own way, and since I have the same perfection, I will settle that matter immediately, to prevent those ill consequences he apprehends. Your grace shall have your own way, in all places, except your own house and the domains about it. There, and there only, I expect to have mine; so that you have all the world to reign in, bating only two or three hundred acres, and two or three houses in town or country. I will likewise, out of my special grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, allow you to be in the right against all human kind, except myself, and to be never in the wrong but when you differ

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from me. You shall have a greater privilege in the third article of speaking your mind: which I shall graciously allow you now and then to do even to myself, and only rebuke you when it does not please me.

Madam, I am now got as far as your grace's letter, which having not read this fortnight, (having been out of town, and not daring to trust myself with the carriage of it,) the presumptuous manner in which you begin had slipped out of my memory. But I forgive you to the seventeenth line, where you begin to banish me for ever, by demanding me to answer all the good character some partial friends have given me. Madam, I have lived sixteen years in Ireland, with only an intermission of two summers in England; and, consequently, am fifty years older than I was at the queen's death, and fifty thousand times duller, and fifty millions times more peevish, perverse, and morose; so that under these disadvantages I can only pretend to excel all your other acquaintance about some twenty bars' length. Pray, madam, have you a clear voice? and will you let me sit at your left hand at least within three of you, for of two bad ears my right is the best? My groom tells me that he likes your park, but your house is too little. Can the parson of the parish play at backgammon, and hold his tongue? is any one of your women a good nurse, if I should fancy myself sick for four-and-twenty hours? how many days will you maintain me and my equipage? When these preliminaries are settled, I must be very poor, very sick, or dead, or to the last degree unfortunate, if I do not attend you at Amesbury. For, I profess, you are the first lady that ever I desired to see since the first of August

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1714,¹ and I have forgot the date when that desire grew strong upon me, but I know I was not then in England, else I would have gone on foot for that happiness as far as to your house in Scotland. But I can soon recollect the time, by asking some ladies here the month, the day, and the hour, when I began to endure their company; which, however, I think, was a sign of my ill judgment, for I do not perceive they mend in anything but envying or admiring your grace. I dislike nothing in your letter but an affected apology for bad writing, bad spelling, and a bad pen; which you pretend Mr. Gay found fault with; wherein you affront Mr. Gay, you affront me, and you affront yourself. False spelling is only excusable in a chambermaid, for I would not pardon it in any of your waiting women. Pray God preserve your grace and family, and give me leave to expect that you will be so just to remember me among those who have the greatest regard for virtue, goodness, prudence, courage, and generosity; after which you must conclude that I am, with the greatest respect and gratitude, Madam, your grace's most obedient and most humble servant, &c.

TO GAY.

I HAVE just got yours of February 24, with a post-script by Mr. Pope. I am in great concern for him; I find Mr. Pope dictated to you the first part, and with great difficulty some days after added the rest. I see his weakness by his hand-writing. How much does his philosophy exceed mine! I could not bear to see him: I will write to him soon.

¹ The date of Queen Anne's death.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

TO MR. SECRETARY ST. JOHN (*Lord Bolingbroke*).

January 7, 1710-11.

SIR,

THOUGH I should not value such usage from a Secretary of State, and a great minister; yet when I consider the person it comes from, I can endure it no longer. I would have you know, sir, that if the queen gave you a dukedom and the garter to-morrow, with the treasury staff at the end of them, I would regard you no more than if you were not worth a groat. I could almost resolve, in spite, not to find fault with my victuals, or be quarrelsome to-morrow at your table; but if I do not take the first opportunity to let all the world know some qualities in you that you take most care to hide, may my right hand forget its cunning. After which threatening, believe me, if you please, to be with the greatest respect, Sir,

Your most obedient, most obliged,

and most humble servant,

JON. SWIFT.

August 7, 1714.

MY LORD,

I HAD yours of the third; and our country post is so ordered, that I could acknowledge it no sooner. It is true, my lord, the events of five days last week might furnish morals for another volume of Seneca. As to my Lord Oxford, I told him freely my opinion before I left the town, that he ought to resign at the end of the session. I said the same thing often to

SWIFT TO BOLINGBROKE

your lordship and my Lady Masham, although you seemed to think otherwise, for some reasons; and said so to him one afternoon, when I met you there with my lord-chancellor. But I remember, one of the last nights I saw him (it was at Lady Masham's lodgings,) I said to him, "That, upon the foot your lordship and he then were, it was impossible you could serve together two months:" and, I think, I was just a week out in my calculation. I am only sorry, that it was not a resignation, rather than a removal: because the personal kindness and distinction I always received from his lordship and you, gave me such a love for you both (if you great men will allow that expression in a little one,) that I resolved to preserve it entire, however you differed between yourselves; and in this I did, for some time, follow your commands and example. I impute it more to the candour of each of you, than to my own conduct, that having been, for two years, almost the only man who went between you, I never observed the least alteration in either of your countenances towards me. I will swear for no man's sincerity. much less for that of a minister of state: but thus much I have said, wherever it was proper, that your lordship's proposals were always the fairest in the world, and I faithfully delivered them as I was empowered: and although I am no very skilful man at intrigue, yet I durst forfeit my head, that if the case were mine, I could either have agreed with you, or put you *dans votre tort*. When I saw all reconciliation impracticable, I thought fit to retire; and was resolved, for some reasons (not to be mentioned at this distance,) to have nothing to do with whom-ever was to be last in. For either I should not be

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needed, or not be made use of. And let the case be what it would, I had rather be out of the way. All I pretended was, to speak my thoughts freely, to represent persons and things without any mingle of my interest or passions, and sometimes to make use of an evil instrument, which was likely to cost me dear, even from those for whose service it was employed. I did believe there would be no farther occasion for me, upon any of those accounts. Besides, I had so ill an opinion of the queen's health, that I was confident you had not a quarter of time left for the work you had to do; having let slip the opportunity of cultivating those dispositions she had got after her sickness at Windsor. I never left pressing my Lord Oxford with the utmost earnestness (and perhaps more than became me), that we might be put in such a condition, as not to lie at mercy on this great event: and I am your lordship's witness that you have nothing to answer for in that matter. I will, for once, talk in my trade, and tell you, that I never saw anything more resemble our proceedings, than a man of fourscore, or in a deep consumption, going on in his sins; although his physician assured him he could not live a week. Those wonderful refinements, of keeping men in expectation, and not letting your friends be too strong, might be proper in their season—*Sed nunc non erat his locus*. Besides, you kept your bread and butter till it was too stale for anybody to care for it. Thus your machine of four years' modelling is dashed to pieces in a moment: and, as well by the choice of the regents as by their proceedings, I do not find there is any intention of managing you in the least. The whole nineteen consist either of the highest party-men, or

SWIFT TO BOLINGBROKE

(which mightily mends the matter) of such who left us upon the subject of the peace, and affected jealousies about the succession. It might reasonably be expected, that this quiet possession might convince the successor of the good dispositions of the church party towards him ; and I ever thought there was a mighty failure somewhere or other, that this could not have been done in the queen's life. But this is too much for what is past ; and yet, whoever observed and disliked the causes, has some title to quarrel with the effects. As to what is to come, your lordship is in the prime of your years, *plein des esprits qui fournissent les espérances* ; and you are now again to act that part (though in another assembly) which you formerly discharged so much to your own honour and the advantage of your cause. You set out with the wind and tide against you ; yet, at last, arrived at your port, from whence you are now driven back into open sea again. But, not to involve myself in an allegory, I doubt whether, after this disappointment, you can go on with the same vigour you did in your more early youth. Experience, which has added to your wisdom, has lessened your resolution. You are now a general, who, after many victories, have lost a battle, and have not the same confidence in yourself, or your troops. Your fellow-labourers have either made their fortunes, or are past them, or will go over to seek them on the other side.—Yet after all, and to resume a little courage ; to be at the head of the church interest is no mean station ; and that, as I take it, is now in your lordship's power. In order to which, I could heartily wish for that union you mention ; because, I need not tell you, that some are more

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

dexterous at pulling down their enemies than, &c. We have certainly more heads and hands than our adversaries; but it must be confessed, they have stronger shoulders and better hearts. I only doubt my friends, the rabble, are at least grown trimmers; and that, setting up the cry of "trade and wool," against "Sacheverell and the church," has cooled their zeal. I take it for granted, there will be a new parliament against winter; and if they will retain me on the other side as their counsellor, I will engage them a majority. But since it is possible I may not be so far in their good graces, if your lordship thinks my service may be of any use in this new world, I will be ready to attend you by the beginning of winter. For the misfortune is, that I must go to Ireland to take the oaths; which I never reflected on till I had notice from some friends in London: and the sooner I go the better, to prevent accidents; for I would not willingly want a favour at present. I think to set out in a few days, but not before your lordship's commands and instructions may reach me. I cannot conclude without offering my humblest thanks and acknowledgments, for your lordship's kind intentions towards me, (if this accident had not happened,) of which I received some general hints.—I pray God direct your lordship: and I desire you will believe me to be what I am, with the utmost truth and respect,

Your lordship's most obedient, &c.,

JON. SWIFT.

SWIFT TO BOLINGBROKE

DUBLIN, Sept. 14, 1714.

MY LORD,

I HOPE your lordship who were always so kind to me while you were a servant, will not forget me now in your greatness. I give you this caution, because I really believe you will be apt to be exalted in your new station of retirement, which was the only honourable post that those who gave it you were capable of conferring. And as, in other employments, the circumstances with which they are given, are sometimes said to be equally valuable with the gift itself, so it was in your case. The sealing up your office, and especially without any directions from the king, discovered such sentiments of you in such persons, as would make any honest man proud to share them.

I must be so free as to tell you, that this new office of retirement will be harder for you to keep, than that of secretary : and you lie under one great disadvantage, besides your being too young ; that whereas none but knaves and fools desire to deprive you of your former post, all the honest men in England will be for putting you out of this.

I go on in writing, though I know not how to send you my letter. If I were sure it would be opened by the sealers of your office, I would fill it with some terms of art, that they would better deserve, than relish.

It is a point of wisdom too hard for me, not to look back with vexation upon past management. Divines tell us often from their pulpits, "that half the pains which some men take to be damned, would have compassed their salvation : " this, I am sure, was

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

extremely our case. I know not what motions your lordship intends: but, if I see the old Whig measures taken in the next elections; and that the Court, the Bank, East India, and South Sea, act strenuously, and procure a majority, I shall lie down and beg of Jupiter to heave the cart out of the dirt.

I would give all I am worth, for the sake of my country, that you had left your mantle with somebody in the House of Commons, or that a dozen honest men among them had only so many shreds of it.— And so, having dispatched all our friends in England, off flies a splinter, and knocks two governors of Ireland dead. I remember, we never had leisure to think of that kingdom. The poor dead queen is used like the giant Longaron in Rabelais. Pantagrue took Longaron by the heels, and made him his weapon to kill twenty other giants; then flung him over a river into the town, and killed two ducks and an old cat. I could talk very wisely to you, but you would regard me not. I could bid you, *non desperare de republicâ*; and say, that *res nolunt diu malè administrari*. But I will cut all short, and assure you, that if you do not save us, I will not be at the pains of racking my invention to guess how we shall be saved; and yet I have read Polybius.

They tell me you have a very good crop of wheat, but the barley is bad. Hay will certainly be dear, unless we have an open winter. I hope you found your hounds in good condition, and that Bright has not made a stirrup-leather of your jockey-belt.

I imagine you now smoking with your humdrum squire, (I forget his name,) who can go home at midnight, and open a dozen gates when he is drunk.

I beg your lordship not to ask me to lend you any

SWIFT TO BOLINGBROKE

money. If you will come and live at the deanery, and furnish up an apartment, I will find you in victuals and drink, which is more than ever you got by the court : and as proud as you are, I hope to see you accept a part of this offer before I die.

The — take this country ; it has, in three weeks, spoiled two as good sixpenny pamphlets, as ever a proclamation was issued out against. And since we talk of that, there will not be * * *.¹ I shall be cured of loving England, as the fellow was of his ague, by getting himself whipped through the town.

I would retire too, if I could ; but my country-seat, where I have an acre of ground, is gone to ruin. The wall of my own apartment is fallen down, and I want mud to rebuild it, and straw to thatch it. Besides, a spiteful neighbour has seized on six feet of ground, carried off my trees, and spoiled my grove. All this is literally true, and I have not fortitude enough to go and see these devastations.

But, in return, I live a country life in town, see nobody, and go every day once to prayers ; and hope, in a few months, to grow as stupid as the present situation of affairs will require.

Well, after all, parsons are not such bad company, especially when they are under subjection ; and I let none but such come near me.

However, pray God forgive them by whose indolence, neglect, or want of friendship, I am reduced to live with twenty leagues of salt water between your lordship and me, &c.

JON. SWIFT.

¹ MS. illegible.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

TO LORD-TREASURER OXFORD.

*(On the death of his daughter, the Marchioness of
Caermarthen.)*

Nov. 21, 1713.

MY LORD,

YOUR lordship is the person in the world to whom everybody ought to be silent upon such an occasion as this, which is only to be supported by the greatest wisdom and strength of mind : wherein, God knows, the wisest and best of us, who would presume to offer their thoughts, are far your inferiours. It is true, indeed, that a great misfortune is apt to weaken the mind, and disturb the understanding. This, indeed, might be some pretence to us to administer our consolations, if we had been wholly strangers to the person gone. But, my lord, whoever had the honour to know her, wants a comforter as much as your lordship : because, though their loss is not so great, yet they have not the same firmness and prudence, to support the want of a friend, a patroness, a benefactor, as you have to support that of a daughter. My lord, both religion and reason forbid me to have the least concern for that lady's death, upon her own account ; and he must be an ill Christian, or a perfect stranger to her virtues, who would not wish himself, with all submission to God Almighty's will, in her condition. But your lordship, who has lost such a daughter, and we, who have lost such a friend, and the world, which has lost such an example, have, in our several degrees, greater cause to lament, than, perhaps, was ever given by any private person before : for, my lord, I have sat down to think of every amiable quality that could



Swift

SWIFT TO HARLEY

enter into the composition of a lady, and could not single out one, which she did not possess in as high a perfection as human nature is capable of. But as to your lordship's own particular, as it is an unconceivable misfortune to have lost such a daughter, so it is possession which few can boast of to have had such a daughter. I have often said to your lordship, "That I never knew any one by many degrees so happy in their domestics as you ;" and I affirm you are so still, though not by so many degrees : from whence it is very obvious, that your lordship should reflect upon what you have left, and not upon what you have lost.

To say the truth, my lord, you began to be too happy for a mortal ; much more happy than is usual with the dispensations of Providence long to continue. You had been the great instrument of preserving your country from foreign and domestic ruin : you have had the felicity of establishing your family in the greatest lustre, without any obligation to the bounty of your prince, or any industry of your own : you have triumphed over the violence and treachery of your enemies, by your courage and abilities : and by the steadiness of your temper, over the inconstancy and caprice of your friends. Perhaps your lordship has felt too much complacency within yourself upon this universal success : and God Almighty, who would not disappoint your endeavours for the public, thought fit to punish you with a domestic loss, where he knew your heart was most exposed ; and at the same time, has fulfilled his own wise purposes, by rewarding in a better life, that excellent creature he has taken from you.

I know not, my lord, why I write this to you, nor hardly what I am writing. I am sure it is not from

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any compliance with form ; it is not from thinking that I can give your lordship any ease. I think it was an impulse upon me that I should say something : and whether I shall send you what I have written, I am yet in doubt, etc.

JON. SWIFT.

July 1, 1714.

MY LORD,

WHEN I was with you, I have said more than once, that I would never allow quality or station made any real difference between men. Being now absent and forgotten, I have changed my mind ; you have a thousand people who can pretend they love you, with as much appearance of sincerity as I ; so that, according to common justice, I can have but a thousandth part in return of what I give, and this difference is wholly owing to your station. And this misfortune is still the greater, because I always loved you just so much the worse for your station ; for, in your public capacity you have often angered me to the heart, but, as a private man, never once. So that, if I only look toward myself, I could wish you a private man tomorrow ; for I have nothing to ask ; at least nothing that you will give, which is the same thing : and then you would see whether I should not with much more willingness attend you in a retirement, whenever you please to give me leave, than ever I did at London or Windsor. From these sentiments I will never write to you, if I can help it, otherwise than as a private person, or allow myself to have been obliged to you in any other capacity.

The memory of one great instance of your candour and justice, I will carry to my grave ; that having

SWIFT TO HARLEY

been in a manner domestic with you for almost four years, it was never in the power of any public or concealed enemy, to make you think ill of me, though malice and envy were often employed to that end. If I live, posterity shall know that, and more ; which, though you, and somebody that shall be nameless, seem to value less than I could wish, is all the return I can make you. Will you give me leave to say how I would desire to stand in your memory ? As one, who was truly sensible of the honour you did him, though he was too proud to be vain upon it ; as one, who was neither assuming, officious, nor teasing ; who never wilfully misrepresented persons or facts to you, nor consulted his passions when he gave a character ; and, lastly, as one, whose indiscretions proceeded altogether from a weak head, and not an ill heart. I will add one thing more, which is the highest compliment I can make, that I never was afraid of offending you, nor am now in any pain for the manner I write to you in. I have said enough ; and, like one at your levee, having made my bow, I shrink back into the crowd.

I am, &c.

JON. SWIFT.

DUBLIN, July 19, 1715.

MY LORD,

It may look like an idle or officious thing in me to give your lordship any interruption under your present circumstances ; yet I could never forgive myself, if, after being treated for several years with the greatest kindness and distinction, by a person of your lordship's virtue, I should omit making you at this time the humblest offers of my poor service and

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attendance. It is the first time I ever solicited you in my own behalf; and if I am refused, it will be the first request you ever refused me. I do not think myself obliged to regulate my opinions by the proceedings of a House of Lords or Commons; and therefore, however they may acquit themselves in your lordship's case, I shall take the liberty of thinking and calling your lordship the ablest and faithfullest minister, and truest lover of your country, that this age has produced: and I have already taken care that you shall be so represented to posterity in spite of all the rage and malice of your enemies. And this I know will not be wholly indifferent to your lordship; who, next to a good conscience, always esteemed reputation your best possession. Your intrepid behaviour under this prosecution astonishes every one but me, who know you so well, and how little it is in the power of human actions or events to discompose you. I have seen your lordship labouring under great difficulties, and exposed to great dangers, and overcoming both, by the providence of God, and your own wisdom and courage. Your life has already been attempted by private malice; it is now pursued by public resentment. Nothing else remained. You were destined to both trials; and the same power which delivered you out of the paws of the lion and the bear, will, I trust, deliver you out of the hands of the uncircumcised.

I can write no more. You suffer for a good cause; for having preserved your country, and for having been the great instrument under God, of his present majesty's peaceable accession to the throne. This I know, and this your enemies know; and this I will take care that all the world shall know, and future

SWIFT TO HARLEY

ages be convinced of. God Almighty protect you, and continue to you that fortune and magnanimity he has endowed you with ! Farewell.

JON. SWIFT.

October 11, 1722.

MY LORD,

I OFTEN receive letters franked *Oxford*, but always find them written and subscribed by your lordship's servant *Mynett*. His meaning is some business of his own, wherein I am his solicitor ; but he makes his court by giving me an account of the state of your family ; and perpetually adds a clause, "That your lordship soon intends to write to me." I knew you indeed when you were not so great a man as you are now, I mean when you were treasurer ; but you are grown so proud since your retirement, that there is no enduring you : and you have reason, for you never acted so difficult a part of life before. In the two great scenes of power and persecution you have excelled mankind ; and in this of retirement, you have most injuriously forgotten your friends. Poor Prior often sent me his complaints on this occasion : and I have returned him mine. I never courted your acquaintance when you governed Europe, but you courted mine ; and now you neglect me, when I use all my insinuations to keep myself in your memory. I am very sensible, that next to receiving thanks and compliments, there is nothing you more hate than writing letters ; but, since I never gave you thanks, nor made you compliments, I have so much more merit than any of those thousands whom you have less obliged, by only making their fortunes, without

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taking them into your friendship, as you did me ; whom you always countenanced in too public and particular a manner to be forgotten, either by the world or myself ; for which, never man was more proud, or less vain.

I have now been ten years soliciting for your picture ; and if I had solicited you for a thousand pounds (I mean of your money, not the public) I could have prevailed in ten days. You have given me many hundred hours ; can you not now give me a couple ? have my mortifications been so few, or are you so malicious to add a greater than I ever yet suffered ? did you ever refuse me anything I asked you ? and will you now begin ? In my conscience, I believe, and by the whole conduct of your life I have reason to believe, that you are too poor to bear the expense. I ever told you I was the richer man of the two : and I am now richer by five hundred pounds, than I was at the time when I was boasting at your table of my wealth, before Diamond Pitt.¹

I have hitherto taken up with a scurvy print of you, under which I have placed this lemma :

———*Veteres actus primamque juventam,
Prosequar? ad sese mentem præsentia ducunt.*

And this I will place under your picture, whenever you are rich enough to send it me. I will only promise, in return, that it shall never lose you the reputation of poverty ; which, to one of your birth, patrimony, and employments, is one of the greatest glories of your life, and so shall be celebrated by me.

I entreat your lordship, if your leisure and your

¹ Thomas Pitt, Esq., Governor of Fort St. George, in the East Indies ; noted as proprietor of a celebrated diamond supposed to be the largest in the world.

SWIFT TO TISDALL

health will permit, to let me know when I can be a month with you at Brampton Castle ; because I have a great deal of business with you that relates to posterity. Mr. Mynett has, for some time, led me an uncomfortable life, with his ill accounts of your health ; but, God be thanked, his style of late is much altered for the better.

My hearty and constant prayers are perpetually offered up for the preservation of you and your excellent family. Pray, my lord, write to me : or you never loved me, or I have done something to deserve your displeasure. My lord and Lady Harriot, my brother and sister, pretend to atone by making me fine presents ; but I would have his lordship know, that I would value two of his lines more than two of his manors, &c.

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS

TO THE REV. DR. TISDALL.

(Tisdall had accused Swift of double-dealing, to his prejudice with Stella, whom he wished to marry. We learn, in fact, from the 'Journal' and elsewhere that Swift had not a very high opinion of the reverend doctor.)

LONDON, April 20, 1704.

YESTERDAY coming from the country I found your letter, which had been four or five days arrived, and by neglect was not forwarded as it ought. You have got three epithets for my former letter, which I believe are all unjust : you say it was *unfriendly*, *unkind*, and *unaccountable*. The two first, I suppose, may pass but for one ; saving (as Captain Fluellin

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says, the phrase is) *a little variation*. I shall therefore answer those two as I can ; and for the last, I return it you again by these presents, assuring you that there is more unaccountability in your letter's little finger, than in mine's whole body. And one strain I observe in it, which is frequent enough ; you talk in a mystical sort of way, as if you would have me believe I had some great design, and that you had found it out : your phrases are, "that my letter had the effect you judge I designed ; that you are amazed to reflect on what you judge the cause of it ; and wish it may be in your power to love and value me while you live," &c. In answer to all this, I might with good pretence enough talk starchly, and affect ignorance of what you would be at ; but my conjecture is, that you think I obstructed your inclinations, to please my own, and that my intentions were the same as yours. In answer to all which, I will, upon my conscience and honour tell you the naked truth. First, I think I have said to you before, that, if my fortunes and humour served me to think of that state, I should certainly, among all persons on earth, make your choice : because I never saw that person whose conversation I entirely valued but hers ; this was the utmost I ever gave way to. And secondly, I must assure you sincerely, that this regard of mine never once entered into my head to be an impediment to you : but I judged it would, perhaps, be a clog to your rising in the world : and I did not conceive you were then rich enough to make yourself and her happy and easy. But that objection is now quite removed by what you have at present ; overtures to the mother, without the daughter's giving, and by the assurances of Eaton's livings. I told you indeed,

SWIFT TO TISDALL

that your authority was not sufficient to make me leave, under her own or her friend's hand ; which, I think, was a right and a prudent step. However, I told the mother immediately, and spoke with all the advantages you deserve. But, the objection of your fortune being removed, I declare I have no other ; nor shall any consideration of my own misfortune, in losing so good a friend and companion as her, prevail on me, against her interest and settlement in the world, since it is held so necessary and convenient a thing for ladies to marry ; and that time takes off from the lustre of virgins in all other eyes but mine. I appeal to my letters to herself, whether I was your friend or not in the whole concern ; though the part I designed to act in it was purely passive, which is the utmost I will ever do in things of this nature, to avoid all reproach of any ill consequence, that may ensue in the variety of worldly accidents. Nay, I went so far both to her mother, herself, and I think, to you, as to think it could not be decently broken ; since I supposed the town had got it in their tongues, and therefore I thought it could not miscarry without some disadvantage to the lady's credit. I have always described her to you in a manner different from those, who would be discouraging ; and must add, that though it has come in my way to converse with persons of the first rank, and of that sex, more than is usual to men of my level, and of our function ; yet I have nowhere met with an humour, a wit, or conversation so agreeable, a better portion of good sense, or a truer judgment of men and things, I mean here in England ; for as to the ladies of Ireland, I am a perfect stranger. As to her fortune, I think you know it already ; and if you resume your designs,

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and would have farther intelligence, I shall send you a particular account.

I give you joy of your good fortunes, and envy very much your prudence and temper, and love of peace and settlement ; the reverse of which has been the great uneasiness of my life, and is likely to continue so. And what is the result ? *En queis consevimus agros !* I find nothing but the good words and wishes of a decayed ministry, whose lives and mine will probably wear out before they can serve either my little hopes, or their own ambition. Therefore I am resolved suddenly to retire, like a discontented courtier, and vent myself in study and speculation, till my own humour, or the scene here, shall change.

JON. SWIFT.

TO THE EARL OF PEMBROKE.

[1709. At a conjecture.]

MY LORD,

IT is now a good while since I resolved to take some occasions of congratulating with your lordship, and condoling with the public upon your lordship's leaving the admiralty ; and I thought I could never choose a better time, than when I am in the country with my Lord Bishop of Clogher,¹ and his brother the doctor ;² for we pretend to a *triumvirate* of as humble servants and true admirers of your lordship, as any you have in both islands. You may call them a *triumvirate* ; for, if you please to *try-um*, they will *vie* with the best, and are of the first *rate*, though they are not *men of war*, but men of the church. To say

¹ Dr. St. George Ashe.

² The Rev. Dillon Ashe.

SWIFT TO DR. ATTERBURY

the truth, it was a pity your lordship should be confined to the *Fleet*, when you are not in debt. Though your lordship is *cast away*, you are not *sunk*; nor ever will be, since nothing is out of your lordship's *depth*. Dr. Ashe says, it is but justice that your lordship, who is a man of *letters*, should be placed upon the *post-office*; and my lord bishop adds, that he hopes to see your lordship tossed from that *post* to be a *pillar* of state again; which he desired I would put in by way of *postscript*.

I am, my lord, &c.,

JON. SWIFT.

TO DR. FRANCIS ATTERBURY (*Dean of Christ Church*).

September 1, 1711.

SIR,

I CONGRATULATE with the college, the university, and the kingdom, and condole with myself, upon your new dignity. The virtue I would affect by putting my own interests out of the case, has failed me in this juncture. I only consider that I shall want your conversation, your friendship, your protection, and your good offices, when I can least spare them. I would have come among the crowd of those who make you compliments on this occasion, if I could have brought a cheerful countenance with me. I am full of envy. It is too much, in so bad an age, for a person so inclined, and so able to do good, to have so great a scene of shewing his inclination and abilities.

If great ministers take up this exploded custom of rewarding merit, I must retire to Ireland, and wait for better times. The college and you ought to pray

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for another change at court, otherwise I can easily foretell that their joy and your quiet will be short. Let me advise you to place your books in moveable cases: lay in no great stock of wine, nor make any great alterations in your lodgings at Christ Church, unless you are sure they are such as your successor will approve and pay for. I am afraid the poor college little thinks of this,

"Qui nunc te fruitur credulus aured."

I am going to Windsor with Mr. Secretary; and hope to wait on you either at Bridewell or Chelsea. I am, with great respect and esteem, sir, your most obedient and most obliged, humble servant,

JON. SWIFT.

TO DR. SHERIDAN.

(Written from Quilca, Dr. Sheridan's country-house, where Swift resided for some time. See his verses upon it, beginning,

Let me thy properties explain.)

January 25, 1724-5.

I HAVE a packet of letters, which I intended to send by Molly, who has been stopped three days by the bad weather; but now I will send them by the post to-morrow to Kells, and enclosed to Mr. Tickell; there is one to you, and one to James Stopford.

I can do no work this terrible weather; which has put us all seventy times out of patience. I have been deaf nine days, and am now pretty well recovered again.

Pray desire Mr. Stanton and Mr. Worral to continue giving themselves some trouble with Mr. Pratt; but let it succeed or not, I hope I shall be easy.

Mrs. Johnson swears it will rain till Michaelmas. She is so pleased with her pick-axe, that she wears

SWIFT TO DR. SHERIDAN

it fastened to her girdle on her left side, in balance with her watch. The lake is strangely overflown, and we are desperate about turf, being forced to buy it three miles off: and Mrs. Johnson (God help her!) gives you many a curse. Your mason is come, but cannot yet work upon your garden. Neither can I agree with him about the great wall. For the rest, *vide* the letter you will have on Monday, if Mr. Tickell uses you well.

The news of this country is, that the maid you sent down, John Farelly's sister, is married; but the portion and settlement are yet a secret. The cows here never give milk on Midsummer eve.

You would wonder what carking and caring there is among us for small beer and lean mutton, and starved lamb, and stopping gaps, and driving cattle from the corn. In that we are all-to-be-Dingleyed.

The ladies' room smokes; the rain drops from the skies into the kitchen; our servants eat and drink like the devil, and pray for rain, which entertains them at cards and sleep; which are much lighter than spades, sledges, and crows. Their maxim is,

Eat like a Turk,
Sleep like a dormouse;
Be last at work,
At victuals foremost.

Which is all at present; hoping you and your good family are well, as we are all at this present writing, &c.

Robin has just carried out a load of bread and cold meat for breakfast; this is their way; but now a cloud hangs over them, for fear it should hold up, and the clouds blow off.

I write on till Molly comes in for the letter. O,

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what a draggletail will she be before she gets to Dublin! I wish she may not happen to fall upon her back by the way.

I affirm against Aristotle, that cold and rain congregate homogenes, for they gather together you and your crew, at whist, punch, and claret. Happy weather for Mr. Mauls, Betty, and Stopford, and all ^{ture} ture lovers of cards and laziness.

BLESSINGS OF A COUNTRY LIFE.

Far from our debtors,
No Dublin letters,
Not seen by our betters.

THE PLAGUES OF A COUNTRY LIFE.

A companion with news,
A great want of shoes ;
Eat lean meat, or choose ;
A church without pews.
Our horses astray,
No straw, oats, or hay ;
December in May,
Our boys run away,
All servants at play.

Molly sends for the letter.

June, 1735.

I SUPPOSE you are now angle ling with your tack ling in a purr ling stream, or pad ling and say ling in a boat, or sad ling your stum ling horse with a sap ling in your hands, and snare ling at your groom, or set ling your affairs, or tick ling your cat, or tat ling with your neighbour Price ; not always toy ling in your school. This dries ling weather we in Dub ling are glad of a dump ling, and bab ling is our dare ling. Pray do not look as cow ling at me when I come, but get a fat ling for my dinner, or go a fow ling for fill ling my belly. I hope none of your townfolks are bub ling you : Have you a bow ling green at Cavan ?

SWIFT TO DR. SHERIDAN

I have been ill of my old ay ling, and yet you see I am now as crib ling. Can you buy me an am ling nag? I am bat ling for health, and just craw ling out. My breakfast is cut lings and sugar to cure the curd ling of my blood. My new summer coat is cock ling already, and I am cal ling for my old one. I am cob ling my riding shoes and cur ling my riding periwig. My maid's hens keep such a cack ling, and chuck ling, that I scarce know what I write. My mare is just foe ling, for which my groom is grum ling and grow ling, while the other servants are gob ling and gut ling, and the maids gig ling, and the dogs how ling. My bung ling taylor was tip ling from morning to night. Do you know drive ling Doll with her drab ling tail, and drag ling petticoat, and gog ling eyes; always gag ling like a goose, and hob ling to the alehouse; hand ling a mug, and quarry ling and squab ling with porters, or row ling in the kennel? I bought her a muzzle ling pinner. Mr. Wall walks the streets with his strip ling boy, in his sham ling gait, as cuff ling for the wall, and just ling all he meets. I saw his wife with her pop ling gown, pill ling oranges, and pick ling cucumbers. Her eyes are no longer spark ling, you may find her twat ling with the neighbours, her nose trick ling, and spaw ling the floor, and then smug ling her husband.

A lady whose understanding was sing ling me out as a wit ling or rather a suck ling, as if she were tick ling my fancy, tang ling me with questions, tell ling me many stories, her tongue toe ling like a clapper; says she, an old man's dar ling is better than a young man's war ling. I liked her dad ling and plain deal ling; she was as wise as a goes ling or a duck ling, yet she counted upon gull ling and grave ling me.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

Her maid was hack ling flax and hum ling her mistress, and how ling in the Irish manner: I was fool ling and fiddle ling and fade ling an hour with them. We hear Tisdall is puss ling the curates, or mud ling in an alehouse, or muff ling his chops, or rump ling his band, or mum ling songs, though he be but a mid ling versifier at best, while his wife, in her mac ling lace, is mull ling claret, to make her husband maud ling, or mil ling chocolate for her breakfast, or rust ling in her silks, or net ling her spouse, or nurse ling and swill ling her grand-children and a year ling calf, or oil ling her pimple ling face, or set ling her head dress, or stif ling a f—— to a fizz ling, or boy ling sowins for supper, or pew ling for the death of her kit ling, or over rue ling the poor doctor. As to madame votre femme, I find she has been coup ling her daughters; I wish she were to live upon a cod ling or a chit or ling. She has as mile ling countenance, which is yet better than as well ling belly; I wish she were to go a bull ling and begin with a bill ling, and then go to hick ling. She hath been long as cram ling for power, and would fain be a fond ling, and delights in a fop ling, when she should be fur ling her sails, and fill ling her belly, or game ling about Cavan, or gall ling her company. Why do not you set her a truck ling, with a vengeance, and use her like an under ling, and stop her ray ling, rat ling, rang ling behaviour? I would cure her ram ling and rum ling; but, you are spy ling all, by rig ling into her favour, and are afraid of ruff ling her. I hear you are fell ling your timber at Quilca; you love to have a fee ling of money, which is a grove ling temper in you, and you are for shove ling it up like a lord ling, or rather like a star ling. I suppose now you are vail

SWIFT TO DUCHESS OF ORMOND

ling your bonnet to every squire. I wish you would grow a world ling, and not be strow ling abroad, nor always shake ling yourself at home. Can I have stabe ling with you for my horse? Pray keep plain wholesome table ling for your boys, and employ your maids in teaz ling cloth and reel ling yarn, and unravel ling thread without stay ling it. Set the boys a race ling for diversion; set the scullion a rid ling the cinders without rife ling them. Get some scrub to teach the young boys their spell ling, and the cow-boy to draw small beer without spill ling or pall ling it; have no more pis to ling lads: Employ yourself in nay ling your broken stools. Whip all the libel ling rogues who are loll ling out their tongues, and kind ling quarrels, and rave eye ling their school-fellows, and stick ling with their seniors, and snuff ling in a jeer, and scraw ling on the school walls, and scut ling to the pie-house, and yawl ling and yell ling to frighten little children, and fowl ling the house for mischief sake, and grape ling with the girls. Pray take care of spy ling your younger daughters, or sty ling them pets.

JON. SWIFT.

TO THE DUCHESS OF ORMOND.

Dec. 20, 1712.

MADAM,

ANY other person, of less refinement and prudence than myself, would be at a loss how to thank your grace, upon the surprise of coming home last night, and finding two pictures where only one was demanded. But I understand your grace's malice, and do here affirm you to be the greatest prude upon

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

earth. You will not so much as let your picture be alone in a room with a man, no not with a clergyman, and a clergyman of five-and-forty; and therefore resolv'd my lord duke should accompany it, and keep me in awe, that I might not presume to look too often upon it. For my own part, I begin already to repent that I ever begged your grace's picture; and could almost find in my heart to send it you back; for, although it be the most beautiful sight I ever beheld, except the original, yet the veneration and respect it fills me with, will always make me think I am in your grace's presence; will hinder me from saying and writing twenty idle things that used to divert me; will set me labouring upon majestic, sublime ideas, at which I have no manner of talent; and will make those who come to visit me, think I am grown, on the sudden, wonderful stately and reserved. But in life we must take the evil with the good; and it is one comfort, that I know how to be revenged. For the sight of your grace's resemblance will perpetually remind me of paying my duty to your person; which will give your grace the torment, and me the felicity, of a more frequent attendance.

But, after all, to deal plainly with your grace, your picture, (and I must say the same of my lord duke's), will be of very little use, farther than to let others see the honour you are pleased to do me: for all the accomplishments of your mind and person are so deeply printed in the heart, and represent you so lively to my imagination, that I should take it for a high affront, if you believed it in the power of colours to refresh my memory; almost as high a one, as if your grace should deny me the justice of

SWIFT TO MRS. MARTHA BLOUNT

being, with the most profound respect and gratitude,
Madam,

Your grace's, &c.,

JON. SWIFT.

TO MRS. MARTHA BLOUNT.

DUBLIN, Feb. 29, 1727-8.

DEAR PATTY,

I AM told you have a mind to receive a letter from me, which is a very undecent declaration in a young lady, and almost a confession that you have a mind to write to me ; for as to the fancy of looking on me as a man *sans* consequence, it is what I will never understand. I am told likewise you grow every day younger, and more a fool, which is directly contrary to me, who grow wiser and older, and at this rate we shall never agree. I long to see you a London lady, where you are forced to wear whole clothes, and visit in a chair, for which you must starve next summer at Petersham, with a mantua out at the sides ; and sponge once a-week at our house, without ever inviting us in a whole season to a cow-heel at home. I wish you would bring Mr. Pope over with you when you come ; but we will leave Mr. Gay to his beggars and his operas till he is able to pay his club. How will you pass this summer for want of a squire to Hamcommon and Walpole's Lodge ? for as to Richmond Lodge and Marble-hill, they are abandoned as much as Sir Spencer Compton : and Mr. Schabe's coach, that used to give you so many a set-down, is wheeled off to St. James's. You must be forced to get a horse, and gallop with Mrs. Jansen

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

and Miss Bedier. Your greatest happiness is, that you are out of the chiding of Mrs. Howard and the Dean; but I suppose Mr. Pope is so just as to pay our arrears, and that you edify as much by him as by us, unless you are so happy that he now looks upon you as reprobate and a cast-away, of which I think he hath given me some hints. However, I would advise you to pass this summer at Kensington, where you will be near the court, and out of his jurisdiction; where you will be teased with no lectures of gravity and morality, and where you will have no other trouble than to get into the mercer's books, and take up a hundred pounds of your principal for quadrille. Monstrous, indeed, that a fine lady, in the prime of life and gaiety, must take up with an antiquated Dean, an old gentlewoman of fourscore, and a sickly poet. I will stand by my dear Patty against the world, if Teresa beats you for your good, and I will buy her a fine whip for the purpose. Tell me, have you been confined to your lodging this winter for want of chair-hire? [Do you know that this unlucky Dr. Delany came last night to the deanery, and being denied, without my knowledge, is gone to England this morning, and so I must send this by the post. I bought your opera to-day for sixpence, so small printed that it will spoil my eyes. I ordered you to send me your edition, but now you may keep it till you get an opportunity.] Patty, I will tell you a blunder: I am writing to Mr. Gay, and had almost finished the letter: but by mistake I took up this instead of it, and so the six lines in a hook are all to him, and therefore you must read them to him, for I will not be at the trouble to write them over again. My greatest concern in the matter is, that I am afraid

SWIFT TO MISS HOADLY

I continue in love with you, which is hard after near six months' absence. I hope you have done with your rash and other little disorders, and that I shall see you a fine, young, healthy, plump lady, and if Mr. Pope chides you, threaten him that you will turn heretic. Adieu, dear Patty, and believe me to be one of your truest friends and humblest servants; and that, since I can never live in England, my greatest happiness would be to have you and Mr. Pope condemned, during my life, to live in Ireland, he at the deanery, and you, for reputation sake, just at next door, and I will give you eight dinners a-week, and a whole half dozen of pint bottles of good French wine at your lodgings, a thing you could never expect to arrive at, and every year a suit of fourteenpenny stuff, that should not be worn out at the right side; and a chair costs but sixpence a job; and you shall have catholicity as much as you please, and the Catholic Dean of St. Patrick's, as old again as I, for your confessor. Adieu again, dear Patty.

JON. SWIFT.

TO MISS HOADLY.

June 4, 1734.

MADAM,

WHEN I lived in England, once every year I issued out an edict, commanding that all ladies of wit, sense, merit, and quality, who had an ambition to be acquainted with me, should make the first advances at their peril; which edict, you may believe, was universally obeyed. When (much against my will) I came to live in this kingdom, I published the same edict; only, the harvest here being not alto-

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

gether so plentiful, I confined myself to a smaller compass. This made me often wonder how you came so long to neglect your duty; for, if you pretend ignorance, I may produce legal witnesses against you.

I have heard of a judge bribed with a pig, but it was discovered by the squeaking; and therefore, you have been so politic as to send me a dead one, which can tell no tales. Your present of butter was made with the same design, as a known court practice, to grease my fist that I might keep silence. These are great offences, contrived on purpose to corrupt my integrity. And, besides, I apprehend, that if I should wait on you to return my thanks, you will deny that the pig and butter were any advances at all on your side, and give out that I made them first; by which I may endanger the fundamental privilege that I have kept so many years in two kingdoms, at least make it a point of controversy. However, I have two ways to be revenged; first, I will let all the ladies of my acquaintance know, that you, the sole daughter and child of his grace of Dublin, are so mean as to descend to understand housewifery; which every girl of this town, who can afford sixpence a-month for a chair, would scorn to be thought to have the least knowledge in; and this will give you as ill a reputation, as if you had been caught in the fact of reading a history, or handling a needle, or working in a field at Tallagh. My other revenge shall be this: when my lord's gentleman delivered his message, after I put him some questions, he drew out a paper containing your directions, and in your hand; I said it properly belonged to me; and, when I had read it, I put it in my pocket, and am ready to swear, when

SWIFT TO MISS HOADLY

lawfully called, that it is written in a fair hand, rightly spelt and good plain sense. You now may see I have you at mercy ; for, upon the least offence given, I will shew the paper to every female scrawler I meet, who will soon spread about the town, that your writing and spelling are ungenteel and unfashionable, more like a parson than a lady.

I suppose, by this time, you are willing to submit : and therefore, I desire you may stint me to two china bowls of butter a-week ; for my breakfast is that of a sickly man, rice gruel ; and I am wholly a stranger to tea and coffee, the companions of bread and butter. I received my third bowl last night, and I think my second is almost entire. I hope and believe my lord archbishop will teach his neighbouring tenants and farmers a little English country management : and I lay it upon you, madam, to bring housewifery in fashion among our ladies ; that, by your example, they may no longer pride themselves on their natural or affected ignorance. I am, with the truest respect and esteem,

Madam,

Your most obedient and obliged, &c.,

JON. SWIFT.

I desire to present my most, &c., to his grace and the ladies.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS
TO MISS HAMILTON OF CALEDON.

DEANERY-HOUSE, DUBLIN, June 8, 1738.

MADAM,

SOME days ago, my Lord Orrery had the assurance to shew me a letter of yours to him, where you did me the honour to say many things in my favour ; I read the letter with great delight ; but at the same time I reproached his lordship for his presumption, in pretending to take a lady from me, who had made so many advances, and confessed herself to be nobody's goddess but mine. However, he had the boldness to assure me, that he had your consent to take him for a husband. I therefore command you never to accept him, without my leave under my own hand and seal. And as I do not know any lady in this kingdom of so good sense, or so many accomplishments, I have at last, with a heavy heart, permitted him to make himself the happiest man in the world ; for I know no fault in him, except his treacherous dealing with me.

Pray God make you happy in yourselves, and each other ; and believe me to be, with the truest esteem and respect,

Madam,

Your most obedient, and obliged servant,

JON. SWIFT.

I have neither mourning paper nor gilt at this time ; and if I had, I could not tell which I ought to choose.

SWIFT TO MRS. WHITEWAY

TO MRS. WHITEWAY.

I HAVE been very miserable all night, and to-day extremely deaf and full of pain. I am so stupid and confounded, that I cannot express the mortification I am under both in body and mind. All I can say is, that I am not in torture ; but I daily and hourly expect it. Pray let me know how your health is and your family. I hardly understand one word I write. I am sure my days will be very few ; few and miserable they must be.

I am, for those few days, yours entirely,

JON. SWIFT.

If I do not blunder, it is Saturday,
July 26, 1740.

If I live till Monday, I shall hope to see you, perhaps for the last time.

LETTERS TO SWIFT

FROM GAY.

LONDON, June 8, 1714.

SIR,

SINCE you went out of the town, my Lord Clarendon was appointed envoy-extraordinary to Hanover in the room of Lord Paget ; and by making use of those friends, which I entirely owe to you, he has accepted me for his secretary. This day, by appointment, I met his lordship at Mr. Secretary Bromley's office ; he then ordered me to be ready by Saturday. I am quite off from the Duchess of Monmouth. Mr. Lewis was very ready to serve me upon this occasion, as were Dr. Arbuthnot and Mr. Ford. I am every day attending my lord-treasurer for his bounty, in order to set me out ; which he has promised me upon the following petition, which I sent him by Dr. Arbuthnot :

The Epigrammatical Petition of John Gay.

I'm no more to converse with the swains,
But go where fine people resort :
One can live without money on plains,
But never without it at court.

If, when with the swains I did gambol,
I array'd me in silver and blue :
When abroad, and in courts, I shall ramble,
Pray, my lord, how much money will do ?

GAY TO SWIFT

We had the honour of the treasurer's company last Saturday, when we sat upon Scriblerus. Pope is in town, and has brought with him the first book of Homer.

I am this evening to be at Mr. Lewis's with the Provost, Mr. Ford, Parnell, and Pope. It is thought my Lord Clarendon will make but a short stay at Hanover. If it was possible that any recommendation could be procured to make me more distinguished than ordinary, during my stay at that court, I should think myself very happy, if you could contrive any method to prosecute it; for I am told, that their civilities very rarely descend so low as to the secretary. I have all the reason in the world to acknowledge this as wholly owing to you. And the many favours I have received from you, purely out of your love for doing good, assures me you will not forget me in my absence. As for myself, whether I am at home or abroad, gratitude will always put me in mind of the man to whom I owe so many benefits.

I am your most obliged humble servant,

J. GAY.

LONDON, Dec. 22, 1722.

DEAR SIR,

AFTER every post-day, for these eight or nine years, I have been troubled with an uneasiness of spirit, and at last I have resolved to get rid of it, and write to you. I do not deserve you should think so well of me as I really deserve; for I have not professed to you, that I love you as much as ever I did: but you are the only person of my acquaintance

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

almost, that does not know it. Whomever I see that comes from Ireland, the first question I ask is after your health; of which I had the pleasure to hear very lately from Mr. Berkeley. I think of you very often: nobody wishes you better, or longs more to see you. Duke Disney, who knows more news than any man alive, told me I should certainly meet you at the Bath this season: but I had one comfort in being disappointed, that you did not want it for your health. I was there for near eleven weeks for a colic, that I have been often troubled with of late; but have not found all the benefit I expected.

I lodge at present in Burlington-house, and have received many civilities from many great men, but very few real benefits. They wonder at each other for not providing for me: and I wonder at them all. Experience has given me some knowledge of them; so that I can say, that it is not in their power to disappoint me. You find I talk to you of myself; I wish you would reply in the same manner. I hope though you have not heard of me so long, I have not lost my credit with you; but that you will think of me in the same manner, as when you espoused my cause so warmly, which my gratitude never can forget. I am, dear Sir,

Your most obliged, and sincere humble servant,

J. GAY.

P.S.—Mr. Pope, upon reading over this letter, desired me to tell you, that he has been just in the same sentiments with me in regard to you, and shall never forget his obligations to you.

GAY TO SWIFT

LONDON, February 3, 1722-3.

YOU made me happy in answering my last letter in so kind a manner, which, to common appearance, I did not deserve; but I believe you guessed my thoughts, and knew that I had not forgot you, and that I always loved you. When I found that my book was not sent to you by Tooke, Jervas undertook it, and gave it to Mr. Maxwell, who married a niece of Mr. Meredith's. I am surprised you have heard nothing of it, but Jervas has promised me to write about it, so that I hope you will have it delivered to you soon. Mr. Congreve I see often: he always mentions you with the strongest expressions of esteem and friendship. He labours still under the same afflictions as to his sight and gout; but in his intervals of health, he has not lost anything of his cheerful temper. I passed all the last season with him at the Bath, and I have great reason to value myself upon his friendship; for I am sure he sincerely wishes me well. We pleased ourselves with the thoughts of seeing you there; but Duke Disney, who knows more intelligence than anybody besides, chanced to give us a wrong information. If you had been there, the duke promised, upon my giving him notice, to make you a visit. He often talks of you, and wishes to see you.

I was two or three days ago at Dr. Arbuthnot's, who told me, he had written you three letters, but had received no answer. He charged me to send you his advice, which is, come to England and see your friends. This he affirms (abstracted from the desire he has to see you) to be very good for your health. He thinks, that your going to Spa, and drinking the

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

waters there, would be of great service to you, if you have resolution enough to take the journey. But he would have you try England first. I like the prescription very much, but I own I have a self-interest in it; for your taking this journey would certainly do me a great deal of good. Pope has just now embarked himself in another great undertaking as an author; for, of late, he has talked only as a gardener. He has engaged to translate the *Odyssey* in three years, I believe rather out of a prospect of gain than inclination; for I am persuaded he bore his part in the loss of the South Sea. He lives mostly at Twickenham, and amuses himself in his house and garden. I supped about a fortnight ago with Lord Bathurst and Lewis, at Dr. Arbuthnot's. Whenever your old acquaintance meet, they never fail of expressing their want of you. I wish you would come, and be convinced that all I tell you is true.

As for the reigning amusement of the town, it is entirely music; real fiddles, bass-voils, and hautboys; not poetical harps, lyres, and reeds. There's nobody allowed to say, I sing, but an eunuch, or an Italian woman. Everybody is grown now as great a judge of music, as they were in your time of poetry; and folks, that could not distinguish one tune from another, now daily dispute about the different styles of Handel, Bononcini, and Attilio. People have now forgot Homer, and Virgil, and Cæsar; or at least, they have lost their ranks. For, in London and Westminster, in all polite conversations, Senesino is daily voted to be the greatest man that ever lived.

I am obliged to you for your advice, as I have been formerly for your assistance, in introducing me into business. I shall this year be commissioner of the

GAY TO SWIFT

state lottery, which will be worth to me a hundred and fifty pounds. And I am not without hopes, that I have friends that will think of some better and more certain provision for me. You see I talk to you of myself, as a thing of consequence to you. I judge by myself; for to hear of your health and happiness, will always be one of my greatest satisfactions. Every one that I have named in the letter, give their service to you. I beg you to give mine, Mr. Pope's, and Mr. Kent's, to Mr. Ford. I am, dear Sir,

Your most faithful and most humble servant,

J. GAY.

P.S.—My paper was so thin, that I was forced to make use of a cover. I do not require the like civility in return.

WHITEHALL, October 22, 1726.

DEAR SIR,

BEFORE I say one word to you, give me leave to say something of the other gentleman's affair. The letter was sent; and the answer was, that everything was finished and concluded according to orders, and that it would be publicly known to be so in a very few days; so that, I think, there can be no occasion for his writing any more about this affair.

The letter you wrote to Mr. Pope, was not received till eleven or twelve days after date; and the post-office, we suppose, have very vigilant officers: for they had taken care to make him pay for a double letter. I wish I could tell you, that the cutting of the tendons of two of his fingers¹ was a joke; but it

¹ See further account of this accident in a letter from Arbuthnot, September 20, 1726, *q.v.*

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

is really so ; the wound is quite healed ; his hand is still weak, and the two fingers drop downward, as I told before ; but I hope it will be very little troublesome or detrimental to him.

In answer to our letter of maps, pictures, and receipts, you call it a tripartite letter. If you will examine it once again, you will find some lines of Mrs. Howard, and some of Mr. Pulteney, which you have not taken the least notice of. The receipt of the veal is of Monsieur Devaux, Mr. Pulteney's cook : and it has been approved of at one of our Twickenham entertainments. The difficulty of the sauce-pan, I believe you will find is owing to a negligence in perusing the manuscript ; for, if I remember right, it is there called a stew-pan. Your earthen vessel, provided it is close stopped, I allow to be a good *succedaneum*. As to the boiling chickens in a wooden bowl, I should be quite ashamed to consult Mrs. Howard upon your account, who thinks herself entirely neglected by you, in not writing to her, as you promised ; however, let her take it as she will, to serve a friend, I will venture to ask it of her. The prince and his family come to settle in town tomorrow. That Mr. Pulteney expected an answer to his letter, and would be extremely pleased to hear from you, is very certain ; for I have heard him talk of it with expectation for above a fortnight.

I have of late been very much out of order with a slight fever, which I am not yet quite free from. It was occasioned by a cold, which my attendance at the Guildhall improved. I have not a friend who has got anything under my administration, but the Duchess of Queensberry, who has had a benefit of a thousand pounds. Your mentioning Mr. Rollinson

GAY TO SWIFT

so kindly, will, I know, give him much pleasure ; for he always talks of you with great regard, and in the strongest terms of friendship. He has been of late ill of a fever, but is recovered so as to go abroad and take the air.

If the engravers keep their word with me, I shall be able to publish my Fables soon after Christmas. The doctor's book¹ is entirely printed off, and will very soon be published. I believe you will expect that I should give you some account how I have spent my time since you left me. I have attended my distressed friend at Twickenham, and been his *amanuensis*, which you know is no idle charge. I have read about half Virgil, and half Spenser's Fairy Queen. I still despise court preferments, so that I lose no time upon attendance on great men ; and still can find amusement enough without quadrille, which here is the universal employment of life.

I thought you would be glad to hear from me, so that I determined not to stir out of my lodgings till I had answered your letter : and I think I shall very probably hear more of the matter which I mention in the first paragraph of this letter as soon as I go abroad ; for I expect it every day. We have no news as yet of Mr. Stopford : Mr. Rollinson told me he shall know of his arrival, and will send me word. Lord Bolingbroke has been to make a visit to Sir William Wyndham. I hear he is returned but I have not seen him. If I had been in a better state of health, and Mrs. Howard were not to come to town to-morrow, I would have gone to Mr. Pope's to-day, to have dined with him there on Monday.

You ask me how to address to Lord B——,

¹ Arbuthnot's Tables of Ancient Coins, etc.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

when you are disposed to write to him. If you mean Lord Burlington, he is not yet returned from France, but he is expected every day. If you mean Lord Bathurst, he is in Gloucestershire, and makes but a very short stay ; so that if you direct to one of them in St. James's-Square, or to the other at Burlington House, in Piccadilly, your letter will find them. I will make your compliments to Lord Chesterfield and Mr. Pulteney : and, I beg you, in return, to make mine to Mr. Ford. Next week I shall have a new coat and new buttons, for the birth-day, though I do not know but a turn-coat might have been more for my advantage.

Yours most sincerely and affectionately.

P.S.—I hear that Lord Bolingbroke will be in town, at his own house in Pall Mall, next week.

As we cannot enjoy any good things without your partaking of it, accept of the following receipt for stewing veal :—

Take a knuckle of veal ;
You may buy it, or steal.
In a few pieces cut it :
In a stewing pan put it.
Salt, pepper, and mace,
Must season this knuckle ;
Then what's join'd to a place,¹
With other herbs muckle,
That which kill'd King Will,²
And what never stands still ;³
Some sprigs of that bed⁴
Where children are bred,
Which much you will mend, if
Both spinage and endive,

¹ Vulgo *salary*.—GAY.

² Supposed *sorrel*.—GAY. The name of a horse which fell with King William, and occasioned his death.

³ This is by Dr. Bentley thought to be *time* or *thyme*.—GAY.

⁴ *Parsley*. See Chamberlayne.—GAY.

GAY TO SWIFT

And lettuce and beet,
With marygold meet.
Put no water at all ;
For it maketh things small,
Which, lest it should happen,
A close cover clap on.
Put this pot of Wood's metal¹
In a hot boiling kettle,
And there let it be
(Mark the doctrine I teach)
About,—let me see,—
Thrice as long as you preach :²
So skimming the fat off.
Say grace with your hat off.
O then ; with what rapture
Will it fill dean and chapter !

Nov: 17, 1726.

. ABOUT ten days ago a book was published here of the travels of one Gulliver, which has been the conversation of the whole town ever since: the whole impression sold in a week: and nothing is more diverting than to hear the different opinions people give of it, though all agree in liking it extremely. It is generally said that you are the author; but I am told, the bookseller declares, he knows not from what hand it came. From the highest to the lowest it is universally read, from the cabinet-council to the nursery. The politicians to a man agree, that it is free from particular reflections, but that the satire on general societies of men is too severe. Not but we now and then meet with people of greater perspicuity, who are in search of particular applications in every leaf; and it is highly probable we shall have keys published to give light into Gulliver's design. Lord —— is the person who least approves it, blaming it

¹ Of this composition see the works of the Copper-farthing Dean.—GAY.

² Which we suppose to be near two hours.—GAY.

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as a design of evil consequences to depreciate human nature, at which it cannot be wondered that he takes most offence, being himself the most accomplished of his species, and so losing more than any other of that praise which is due both to the dignity and virtue of a man. Your friend, my Lord Harcourt, commends it very much, though he thinks in some places the matter too far carried. The Duchess Dowager of Marlborough is in raptures at it; she says she can dream of nothing else since she read it: she declares that she has now found out, that her whole life has been lost in caressing the worst part of mankind, and treating the best as her foes: and that if she knew Gulliver, though he had been the worst enemy she ever had, she should give up her present acquaintance for his friendship. You may see by this that you are not much injured by being supposed the author of this piece. If you are, you have disoblged us, and two or three of your best friends, in not giving us the least hint of it while you were with us; and in particular Dr. Arbuthnot, who says it is ten thousand pities he had not known it, he could have added such abundance of things upon every subject. Among lady critics, some have found out that Mr. Gulliver had a particular malice to maids of honour. Those of them who frequent the church, say his design is impious, and that it is depreciating the works of the Creator. Notwithstanding, I am told the princess has read it with great pleasure. As to other critics, they think the flying island is the least entertaining; and so great an opinion the town have of the impossibility of Gulliver's writing at all below himself, it is agreed that part was not writ by the same hand, though this has its defenders too. It

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has passed lords and commons, *nemine contradicente* ; and the whole town, men, women, and children, are quite full of it.

Perhaps I may all this time be talking to you of a book you have never seen, and which has not yet reached Ireland ; if it has not, I believe what we have said will be sufficient to recommend it to your reading, and that you will order me to send it to you.

But it will be much better to come over yourself, and read it here, where you will have the pleasure of variety of commentators, to explain the difficult passages to you.

We all rejoice that you have fixed the precise time of your coming to be *cum hirundine primâ* ; which we modern naturalists pronounce, ought to be reckoned, contrary to Pliny, in this northern latitude of fifty-two degrees, from the end of February, Styl. Greg., at furthest. But to us your friends, the coming of such a black swallow as you, will make a summer in the worst of seasons. We are no less glad at your mention of Twickenham and Dawley ; and in town, you know, you have a lodging at court.

The princess is clothed in Irish silk ; pray give our service to the weavers. We are strangely surprised to hear that the bells in Ireland ring without your money. I hope you do not write the thing that is not. We are afraid that B—— hath been guilty of that crime, that you (like a *houyhnhnm*) have treated him as a yahoo, and discarded him your service. I fear you do not understand these modish terms, which every creature now understands but yourself.

You tell us your wine is bad, and that the clergy do not frequent your house, which we look upon to be

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tautology. The best advice we can give you is, to make them a present of your wine, and come away to better.

You fancy we envy you, but you are mistaken ; we envy those you are with, for we cannot envy the man we love. Adieu.

October 22, 1727.

THOUGH you went away from us so unexpectedly and in so clandestine a manner, yet by several inquiries, we have informed ourselves of everything that hath happened to you.

To our great joy, you have told us, your deafness left you at the inn in Aldersgate Street: no doubt your ears knew there was nothing worth hearing in England.

Our advices from Chester tell us, that you met Captain Lawson: the captain was a man of veracity, and set sail at the time he told you. I really wished you had laid hold of that opportunity, for you had then been in Ireland the next day; besides as it is credibly reported, the captain had a bottle or two of excellent claret in his cabin. You would not then have had the plague of that little smoky room at Holyhead; but considering it was there you lost your giddiness, we have great reason to praise smoky rooms for the future, and prescribe them in like cases to our friends. The maid of the house writes us word that, while you were there, you were busy for ten days together, writing continually; and that, as Wat drew nearer and nearer to Ireland, he blundered more and more. By a scrap of paper left in this smoky room, it seemed as if the book you were writing was a most lamentable account of your

GAY TO SWIFT

travels; and really had there been any wine in the house, the place would not have been so irksome. We were further told, that you set out, were driven back again by a storm, and lay in the ship all night. After the next setting sail, we were in great concern about you, because the weather grew very tempestuous; when, to my great joy and surprise, I received a letter from Carlingford in Ireland, which informed us, that, after many perils, you were safely landed there. Had the oysters been good, it would have been a comfortable refreshment after your fatigue. We compassionated you in your travels through that country of desolation and poverty in your way to Dublin; for it is a most dreadful circumstance, to have lazy dull horses on a road where there are very bad, or no inns. When you carry a sample of English apples next to Ireland, I beg you would get them either from Goodrich or Devonshire. Pray who was the clergyman that met you at some distance from Dublin? because we could not learn his name. These are all the hints we could get of your long and dangerous journey, every step of which we shared your anxieties; and all that we have now left to comfort us, is to hear that you are in good health.

But why should we tell you what you know already? The queen's family is at last settled, and in the list I was appointed gentleman-usher to the Princess Louisa, the youngest princess; which, upon account that I am so far advanced in life, I have declined accepting; and I have endeavoured, in the best manner I could, to make my excuses by a letter to her majesty. So now all my expectations are vanished; and I have no prospect, but in depending wholly upon myself, and my own conduct. As I am

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used to disappointments, I can bear them; but as I can have no more hopes, I can no more be disappointed, so that I am in a blessed condition. You remember you were advising me to go into Newgate to finish my scenes the more correctly. I now think I shall, for I have no attendance to hinder me; but my opera is already finished. I leave the rest of this paper to Mr. Pope.

FROM THE DUKE OF QUEENSBERRY'S, IN BURLINGTON
GARDENS, March 18, 1728-9.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE writ to you several times; and having heard nothing from you makes me fear my letters are miscarried. Mr. Pope's letter has taken off my concern in some degree; but I hope good weather will entirely re-establish you in your health. I am but just recovered from the severest fit of sickness that ever anybody had who escaped death. I was several times given up by the physicians, and everybody that attended me; and upon my recovery, was judged to be in so ill a condition, that I should be miserable for the remainder of my life; but, contrary to all expectation, I am perfectly recovered, and have no remainder of the distempers that attacked me, which were at the same time, fever, asthma, and pleurisy. I am now in the Duke of Queensberry's house, and have been so ever since I left Hampstead; where I was carried at a time that it was thought I could not live a day. Since my coming to town, I have been very little abroad, the weather has been so severe.

I must acquaint you, (because I know it will please

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you,) that during my sickness I had many of the kindest proofs of friendship, particularly from the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry; who, if I had been their nearest relation and nearest friend, could not have treated me with more constant attendance then; and they continue the same to me now.

You must undoubtedly have heard, that the duchess took up my defence with the king and queen, in the cause of my play, and that she has been forbid the court for interesting herself to increase my fortune, by the publication of it without being acted. The duke, too, has given up his employment, (which he would have done, if the duchess had not met with this treatment,) upon account of ill usage from the ministers; but this hastened him in what he had determined. The play is now almost printed, with the music, words, and basses, engraved on thirty-one copper-plates, which, by my friends' assistance, has a possibility to turn greatly to my advantage. The Duchess of Marlborough has given me a hundred pounds for one copy; and others have contributed very handsomely; but, as my account is not yet settled, I cannot tell you particulars.

For writing in the cause of virtue, and against the fashionable vices, I am looked upon at present as the most obnoxious person almost in England. Mr. Pulteney tells me, I have got the start of him. Mr. Pope tells me, that I am dead, and that this obnoxiousness is the reward for my inoffensiveness in my former life. I wish I had a book ready to send you; but, I believe I shall not be able to complete the work till the latter end of the next week. Your money is still in Lord Bathurst's hands: but, I believe, I shall receive it soon: I wish to receive your

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orders how to dispose of it. I am impatient to finish my work, for I want the country air ; not that I am ill, but to recover my strength ; and I cannot leave my work till it is finished. While I am writing this, I am in the room next to our dining-room, with sheets all around it, and two people from the binder folding sheets. I print the book at my own expense, in quarto, which is to be sold for six shillings, with the music. You see I do not want industry ; and I hope you will allow, that I have not the worst economy. Mrs. Howard has declared herself strongly, both to the king and queen, as my advocate. The Duchess of Queensberry is allowed to have shewn more spirit, more honour, and more goodness, than was thought possible in our times ; I should have added, too, more understanding and good sense. You see my fortune (as I hope my virtue will) increases by oppression. I go to no courts ; I drink no wine, and am calumniated even by ministers of state ; and yet am in good spirits. Most of the courtiers, though otherwise my friends, refused to contribute to my undertaking. But the city, and the people of England, take my part very warmly ; and, I am told, the best of the citizens will give me proofs of it by their contributions.

I could talk to you a great deal more, but I am afraid I should write too much for you, and for myself. I have not writ so much together since my sickness. I cannot omit telling you, that Dr. Arbuthnot's attendance and care of me shewed him the best of friends. Dr. Hollins, though entirely a stranger to me, was joined with him, and used me in the kindest and most handsome manner. Mr. and Mrs. Pulteney were greatly concerned for me, visited me, and shewed

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me the strongest proofs of friendship. When I see you I will tell you of others, as of Mr. Pope, Mrs. Blount, Mr. and Mrs. Rollinson, Lord and Lady Bolingbroke, &c. I think they are all your friends and well-wishers. I hope you will love them the better upon my account; but do not forget Mr. Lewis, nor Lord Bathurst, Sir William Wyndham, and Lord Gower, and Lord Oxford, among the number.

My service to Dr. Delany and Mr. Stopford.

MIDDLETON STONEY, Nov. 9, 1729.

I HAVE long known you to be my friend upon several occasions, and particularly by your reproofs and admonitions. There is one thing, which you have often put me in mind of, the overrunning you with an answer before you had spoken. You find I am not a bit the better for it; for I still write and write on, without having a word of an answer. I have heard of you once by Mr. Pope: let Mr. Pope hear of you the next time by me. By this way of treating me, I mean, by your not letting me know that you remember me, you are very partial to me, I should have said very just to me. You seem to think, that I do not want to be put in mind of you, which is very true; for I think of you very often, and as often wish to be with you. I have been in Oxfordshire with the Duke of Queensberry for these three months, and have had very little correspondence with any of our friends. I have employed my time in new writing a damned play, which I wrote several years ago, called "The Wife of Bath." As it is approved or disapproved of by my friends, when I come to town, I shall either

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have it acted, or let it alone, if weak brethren do not take offence at it. The ridicule turns upon superstition, and I have avoided the very words bribery and corruption. Folly, indeed, is a word that I have ventured to make use of; but that is a term that never gave fools offence. It is a common saying that he is wise that knows himself. What has happened of late, I think, is a proof that it is not limited to the wise.

My Lord Bathurst is still our cashier: when I see him, I intend to settle our accounts, and repay myself the five pounds out of the two hundred I owe you. Next week I believe I shall be in town: not at Whitehall, for those lodgings were judged not convenient for me, and were disposed of. Direct to me at the Duke of Queensberry's, in Burlington Gardens, near Piccadilly. You have often twitted me in the teeth for hankering after the court. In that you mistook me: for I know by experience that there is no dependence that can be sure, but a dependence upon one's self. I will take care of the little fortune I have got. I know you will take this resolution kindly, and you see my inclinations will make me write to you, whether you will write to me or not. I am, dear Sir,

Yours most sincerely, and most affectionately,

J. GAY.

P.S.—To the lady I live with, I owe my life and fortune; think of her with respect; value and esteem her as I do; never more despise a fork with three prongs. I wish too you would not eat from the point of your knife. She has so much goodness, virtue, and generosity, that if you knew her, you would have a pleasure in obeying her as I do. She often wishes she had known you.

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AMESBURY, Nov. 7, 1730.

DEAR SIR,

So you are determined never to write to me again ; but, for all that, you shall not make me hold my tongue. You shall hear from me (the post-office willing) whether you will or not. I see none of the folks you correspond with, so that I am forced to pick up intelligence concerning you as I can ; which has been so very little, that I am resolved to make my complaints to you as a friend, who I know loves to relieve the distressed : and in the circumstances I am in, where should I apply, but to my best friend ? Mr. Pope, indeed, upon my frequent inquiries, has told me that the letters which are directed to him concern me as much as himself : but what you say of yourself, or of me, or to me, I know nothing at all. Lord Carteret was here yesterday, in his return from the Isle of Wight, where he had been a-shooting, and left seven pheasants with us. He went this morning to the Bath, to Lady Carteret, who is perfectly recovered. He talked of you three hours last night, and told me that you talk of me : I mean, that you are prodigiously in his favour, as he says ; and I believe that I am in yours ; for I know you to be a just and equitable person, and it is but my due. He seemed to take to me, which may proceed from your recommendation ; though, indeed, there is another reason for it, for he is now out of employment, and my friends have been generally of that sort : for I take to them, as being naturally inclined to those who can do no mischief. Pray, do you come to England this year ? He thinks you do. I wish you would ; and so does the Duchess of

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Queensberry. What would you have more to induce you? Your money cries, Come, spend me: and your friends cry, Come, see me. I have been treated barbarously by you. If you knew how often I talk of you, how often I think of you, you would now and then direct a letter to me, and I would allow Mr. Pope to have his share in it. In short, I do not care to keep any man's money, that serves me so. Love or money I must have; and if you will not let me have the comfort of the one, I think I must endeavour to get a little comfort by spending some of the other. I must beg that you will call at Amesbury, in your way to London; for I have many things to say to you; and I can assure you, you will be welcome to a three-pronged fork. I remember your prescription, and I do ride upon the Downs; and at present I have no asthma. I have killed five brace of partridges, and four brace and a half of quails: and I do not envy either Sir Robert or Stephen Duck, who is the favourite poet of the court. I hear sometimes from Pope, and from scarce anybody else. Were I to live ever so long, I believe I should never think of London; but I cannot help thinking of you. Were you here, I could talk to you, but I would not; for you shall have all your share of talk, which was never allowed you at Twickenham. You know this was a grievance you often complained of; and so in revenge, you make me write all, and answer nothing. I beg my compliments to Dr. Delany.

I am, dear Sir, yours most affectionately,

J. GAY.

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I ended the letter as above, to go to the duchess, and she told me, I might go down, and come a quarter of an hour hence. I had a design to have asked her to sign the invitation, that I have made you. As I do not know how much she may have to say to you, I think it will be prudent to leave off, that she may not be stinted for want of room. So much I will say, that whether she signs it or not, both the duke and duchess would be very glad you would come to Amesbury; and you must be persuaded, that I say this without the least private view. For, what is it to me whether you come or not? For I can write to you, you know.

P.S. BY THE DUCHESS OF QUEENSBERRY.

I would fain have you come. I cannot say you will be welcome; for I do not know you, and perhaps I shall not like you; but if I do not (unless you are a very vain person), you shall know my thoughts as soon as I do myself.

C. Q.

AMESBURY, Dec. 6, 1730.

DEAR SIR,

BOTH your letters, to my great satisfaction, I have received. You were mistaken as to my being in town; for I have been here ever since the beginning of May. But the best way is to direct your letters always to the duke's house in London; and they are sent hither by his porter. We shall stay here till after the holidays. You say we deserve envy: I think we do; for I envy no man either in town or out of it. We have had some visitors, and every

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one of them such as one would desire to visit. The duchess is a more severe check upon my finances than ever you were ; and I submit, as I did to you, to comply to my own good. I was a long time before I could prevail with her to let me allow myself a pair of shoes with two heels ; for I had lost one, and the shoes were so decayed that they were not worth mending. You see by this, that those who are the most generous of their own, can be the most covetous for others. I hope you will be so good to me, as to use your interest with her (for whatever she says, you seem to have some), to indulge me with the extravagance suitable to my fortune.

The lady you mention, that dislikes you, has no discernment. I really think you may safely venture to Amesbury, though indeed the lady here likes to have her own way as well as you ; which may sometimes occasion disputes : and I tell you beforehand, that I cannot take your part. I think her so often in the right, that you will have great difficulty to persuade me she is in the wrong. Then, there is another thing, that I ought to tell you, to deter you from this place ; which is, that the lady of the house is not given to show civility to those she does not like. She speaks her mind, and loves truth. For the uncommonness of the thing, I fancy your curiosity will prevail over your fear ; and you will like to see such a woman. But I say no more till I know whether her grace will fill up the rest of the paper.

FROM THE DUCHESS OF QUEENSBERRY.

Write I must, particularly now, as I have an opportunity to indulge my predominant passion, contradic-

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tion. I do, in the first place, contradict most things Mr. Gay says of me, to deter you from coming here ; which if you ever do, I hereby assure you, that unless I like my own way better, you shall have yours ; and in all disputes you shall convince me if you can. But, by what I see of you, this is not a misfortune that will always happen ; for I find you are a great mistaker. For example, you take prudence for imperiousness: it is from this first, that I determined not to like one who is too giddy-headed for me to be certain whether or not I shall ever be acquainted with. I have known people take great delight in building castles in the air ; but I should choose to build friends upon a more solid foundation. I would fain know you ; for I often hear more good likeable things than it is possible any one can deserve. Pray come, that I may find out something wrong ; for I, and I believe most women, have an inconceivable pleasure to find out any faults except their own. Mr. Cibber is made poet-laureat.

I am, Sir, as much your humble servant as I can be to any person I do not know.

C. Q.

Mr. Gay is very peevish that I spell and write ill ; but I do not care : for neither the pen nor I can do better. Besides, I think you have flattered me, and such people ought to be put to trouble.

MR. GAY'S POSTSCRIPT.

Now I hope you are pleased, and that you will allow, for so small a sum as two hundred pounds, you have a lumping pennyworth.

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THE DUCHESS.

July 18, 1731.

YOU are my dear friend, I am sure, for you are hard to be found ; that you are so, is certainly owing to some evil genius. For if you say true, this is the very properest place you can repair to. There is not a head upon any of our shoulders, that is not, at some times, worse than yours can possibly be at the worst ; and not to compare with yours when at best, except your friends are your sworn liars. So in one respect at least, you will find things just as they could be wished. It is farther necessary to assure you, that the duchess is neither healthy nor young ! she lives in all the spirits she can ; and with as little grandeur as she can possibly. She too, as well as you, can scold, and command ; but she can be silent, and obey, if she pleases ; and then for a good nurse, it is out of dispute, that she must prove an excellent one, who has been so experienced in the infirmities of others, and of her own. As for talking nonsense, provided you do it on purpose, she has no objection : there is some sense in nonsense, when it does not come by chance. In short, I am very sure, that she has set her heart upon seeing you at this place. Here are women enough to attend you, if you should happen not to approve of her. She has not one fine lady belonging to her, or her house. She is impatient to be governed, and is cheerfully determined, that you shall quietly enjoy your own will and pleasure as long as ever you please.

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MR. GAY.

YOU shall ride, you shall walk, and she will be glad to follow your example: and this will be doing good at the same time to her and yourself. I had not heard from you so long, that I was in fears about you, and in the utmost impatience for a letter. I had flattered myself your lawsuit was at an end, and that your own money was in your own pocket; and about a month ago, I was every day expecting a summons to Bristol. Your money is either getting or losing something; for I have placed it in the funds. For I am grown so much a man of business, that is to say, so covetous, that I cannot bear to let a sum of money lie idle. Your friend Mrs. Howard is now Countess of Suffolk. I am still so much a dupe, that I think you mistake her. Come to Amesbury, and you and I will dispute this matter; and the duchess will be judge. But I fancy you will object against her; for I will be so fair to you, as to own, that I think she is of my side; but, in short you shall choose any impartial referee you please. I have heard from her; Mr. Pope has seen her; I beg you would suspend your judgment till we talk over this affair together; for, I fancy, by your letter, you have neither heard from her, nor seen her; so that you cannot at present be as good a judge as we are. I will be a dupe for you at any time: therefore I beg it of you, that you would let me be a dupe in quiet.

As you have had several attacks of the giddiness you at present complain of, and that it has formerly left you, I will hope that at this instant you are perfectly well: though my fears were so very great,

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before I received your letter, that I may probably flatter myself, and think you better than you are. As to my being a manager for the duke, you have been misinformed. Upon the discharge of an unjust steward, he took the administration into his own hands. I own, I was called in to his assistance, when the state of affairs was in the greatest confusion. Like an ancient Roman, I came, put my helping hand to set affairs right, and as soon as it was done, I am retired again as a private man.

THE DUCHESS.

WHAT you imagined you heard her say, was a good deal in her style: it was a thousand to one she had said so; but I must do her the justice to say, that she did not, either in thought or word. I am sure she wants to be better acquainted with you; for which she has found out ten thousand reasons, that we will tell you, if you will come.

MR. GAY.

BY your letter I cannot guess whether we are likely to see you or not. Why might not the Amesbury Downs make you better?

THE DUCHESS.

DEAR SIR,

MR. GAY tells me, I must write upon his line for fear of taking up too much room. It was his fault that I omitted my duty in his last letter, for he never told me one word of writing to you, till he had sent away his letter. However, as a mark of my great humility, I shall be ready and glad to ask your pardon

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upon my knees, as soon as ever you come, though not in fault. I own this is a little mean-spirited; which I hope will not make a bad impression, considering you are the occasion. I submit to all your conditions: so pray, come; for I have not only promised myself, but Mr. Gay also, the satisfaction to hear you talk as much nonsense as you can possibly utter.

MR. GAY.

YOU will read in the Gazette of a friend of yours, who has lately had the dignity of being disgraced;¹ for he, and everybody, except five or six, look upon it in the same light. I know, were you here, you would congratulate him upon it. I paid the twelve pounds to Mrs. Launcelot, for the uses you directed. I have no scheme at present, either to raise my fame or fortune. I daily reproach myself for my idleness. You know one cannot write when one will. I think and reject: one day or other, perhaps, I may think on something that may engage me to write. You and I are alike in one particular, I wish to be so in many; I mean, that we hate to write upon other folks' hints. I love to have my own scheme, and to treat it in my own way. This, perhaps, may be taking too much upon myself, and I may make a bad choice; but I can always enter into a scheme of my own with more ease and pleasure, than into that of any other body. I long to see you; I long to hear from you; I wish you health; I wish you happiness; and I should be very happy myself to be witness that you enjoyed my wishes.

¹ William Pulteney Esq. who, July 1, 1731, was, by order of King George II., struck out of the list of the Privy Council, and put out of all the commissions of the peace.

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FROM DR. ARBUTHNOT.

ST. JAMES'S, June 12, 1714.

DEAR BROTHER,

I AM glad your proud stomach is come down, and that you submit to write to your friends. I was of opinion, that if they managed you right, they might bring you to be even fond of an article in the Post-Boy, or Flying Post. As for the present state of our court affairs, I thank God I am almost as ignorant as you are, to my great ease and comfort. I have never inquired about anything, since my Lady Masham told the dragon,¹ that she would carry no more messages, nor meddle, nor make, &c. I do not know whether things were quite so bad when you went. The dragon manages this bill pretty well; for you know that it is his *forte*: and I believe, at the rate they go on, they will do mischief to themselves and good to nobody else.

You know that Gay goes to Hanover, and my lord-treasurer has promised to equip him. Monday is the day of departure; and he is now dancing attendance for money to buy him shoes, stockings, and linen. The Duchess² has turned him off, which I am afraid will make the poor man's condition worse instead of better.

The dragon was with us on Saturday night last, after having sent us really a most excellent copy of verses. I really believe, when he lays down, he will prove a very good poet. I remember the first part

¹ Lord-Treasurer Oxford.

² Of Monmouth, to whom he had been secretary.

DR. ARBUTHNOT TO SWIFT

of his verses was complaining of ill usage ; and at last he concludes,

He that cares not to rule, will be sure to obey,
When summon'd by Arbuthnot, Pope, Parnell, and Gay.

Parnell has been thinking of going chaplain to my Lord Clarendon ; but they will not say whether he should or not. I am to meet our club at the Pall Mall Coffeehouse, about one to-day, where we cannot fail to remember you. The queen is in good health ; much in the same circumstances with the gentleman I mentioned, in attendance upon her ministers for something she cannot obtain. My Lord and my Lady Masham and Lady Fair, remember you kindly ; and none with more sincere respect than your affectionate brother and humble servant,

JO. ARBUTHNOT.

KENSINGTON, June 26, 1714.

DEAR BROTHER,

I HAD almost resolved not to write to you, for fear of disturbing so happy a state as you describe. On the other hand, a little of the devil, that cannot endure anybody should enjoy a paradise, almost provoked me to give you a long and melancholy state of our affairs. For you must know, that it is just my own case. I have with great industry endeavoured to live in ignorance, but at the same time would enjoy Kensington garden : and then some busy discontented body or another comes just across me, and begins a dismal story ; and before I go to supper, I am as full of grievances as the most knowing of them.

I will plague you a little, by telling you the dragon dies hard. He is now kicking and cuffing about

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him like the devil: and you know parliamentary management is the *forte*, but no hopes of any settlement between the two champions. The dragon said last night to my Lady Masham and me, that it is with great industry he keeps his friends, who are very numerous, from pulling all to pieces. Gay had a hundred pounds in due time, and went away a happy man. I have solicited both Lord-treasurer and Lord Bolingbroke strongly for the Parnellian, and gave them a memorial the other day. Lord-treasurer speaks mightily affectionate of him, which you know is an ill sign in ecclesiastical preferments. Witness some that you and I know, when the contrary was the best sign in the world. Pray remember Martin,¹ who is an innocent fellow, and will not disturb your solitude. The ridicule of medicine is so copious a subject, that I must only here and there touch it. I have made him study physic from the apothecaries' bills, where there is a good plentiful field for a satire upon the present practice. One of his projects was, by a stamp upon blistering-plasters and melilot by the yard, to raise money for the government, and to give it to Radcliffe and others to farm. But there was likely to be a petition from the inhabitants of London and Westminster, who had no mind to be flayed. There was a problem, about the doses of purging medicines, published four years ago, shewing that they ought to be in proportion to the bulk of the patient. From thence Martin endeavours to determine the question about the weight of the ancient men, by the doses of physic that were given them. One of his best inventions was a map of diseases for three cavities of the body,

¹ Martinus Scriblerus. ,

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and one for the external parts; just like the four quarters of the world. Then the great diseases are like capital cities, with their symptoms all like streets and suburbs, with the roads that lead to other diseases. It is thicker set with towns than any Flanders map you ever saw. Radcliffe is painted at the corner of the map, contending for the universal empire of this world, and the rest of the physicians opposing his ambitious designs, with a project of a treaty of partition to settle peace.

There is an excellent subject of ridicule from some of the German physicians, who set up a sensitive soul as a sort of a first minister to the rational. Helmont calls him Archæus. Dolæus calls him Microcosmetor. He has under him several other genii, that reside in the particular parts of the body, particularly Prince Cardimelech in the heart; Gasteronax in the stomach; and the Plastic Prince in the organs of generation. I believe I could make you laugh at the explication of distempers from the wars and alliances of those princes, and how the first minister gets the better of his mistress *anima rationalis*.

The best is, that it is making reprisals upon the politicians, who are sure to allegorize all the animal economy into state affairs. Pope has been collecting high flights of poetry, which are very good; they are to be solemn nonsense.

I thought upon the following the other day, as I was going into my coach, the dust being troublesome:

The dust in smaller particles arose,
Than those which fluid bodies do compose :
Contraries in extremes do often meet,
'Twas now so dry, that you might call it wet.

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I do not give you these hints to divert you, but that you may have your thoughts, and work upon them.

I know you love me heartily, and yet I will not own, that you love me better than I love you. My Lord and Lady Masham love you too, and read your letter to me with pleasure. My lady says she will write to you, whether you write to her or not.—Dear friend, adieu.

LONDON, July 17, 1714.

DEAR BROTHER,

I THOUGHT it necessary to speak to Lady Masham about that affair, because I believe it will be necessary to give her majesty the same notion of it which the memorial does,¹ and not that you are asking a little scandalous salary for a sinecure. Lewis despairs of it, and thinks it quite over since a certain affair. I will not think so. I gave your letter, with the enclosed memorial, *cavalièrement*, to Lord Bolingbroke. He read it, and seemed concerned at some part of it, expressing himself thus: "That it would be among the eternal scandals of the government to suffer a man of your character, that had so well deserved of them, to have the least uneasy thought about those matters." As to the fifty pounds, he was ready to pay it; and, if he had had it about him, would have given it me. The dragon was all the while walking with the Duke of Shrewsbury. So my Lord Bolingbroke told me, "I would immediately stir in this matter, but I know not how I stand with some folks;" for the Duke of Shrewsbury has taken

¹ Swift's memorial to the Queen, humbly desiring her majesty to appoint him historiographer.

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himself to the dragon in appearance. "I know how I stand with that man (pointing to the dragon), but as to the other, I cannot tell ; however, I will claim his promise : " and so he took the memorial.

Do not think I make you a bare compliment in what I am going to say ; for I can assure you I am in earnest. I am in hopes to have two hundred pounds before I go out of town, and you may command all or any part of it you please, as long as you have occasion for it. I know what you will say ; "To see a scoundrel pretend to offer to lend me money." Our situation at present is, in short, thus : —they have *rompu en visière* with the dragon, and yet do not know how to do without him. My Lady Masham has in a manner bid him defiance, without any scheme, or likeness of it in any form or shape, as far as I can see. Notwithstanding, he visits, cringes, flatters, etc., which is beyond my comprehension.

I have a very comical account of Letcombe, and the Dean of St. Patrick's, from Pope, with an episode of the burning-glass. I was going to make an epigram upon the imagination of your burning your own history with the burning-glass. I wish Pope or Parnell would put it into rhyme. The thought is this : Apollo speaks,—"that since he had inspired you to reveal those things which were hid, even from his own light, such as the feeble springs of some great events ; and perceiving that a faction, who could not bear their deeds to be brought to light, had condemned it to an ignominious flame ; that it might not perish so, he was resolved to consume it with his own—a celestial one." And then you must conclude with some simile. Thus, &c. There are two or three that will fit it.

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Whiston has at last published his project of the longitude; the most ridiculous thing that ever was thought on. But a pox on him! he has spoiled one of my papers of Scriblerus, which was a proposal for the longitude, not very unlike his, to this purpose: that since there was no pole for east and west, that all the princes of Europe should join and build two prodigious poles, upon high mountains, with a vast light-house to serve for a pole-star. I was thinking of a calculation of the time, charges, and dimensions. Now you must understand his project is by light-houses, and explosion of bombs at a certain hour.

Lewis invited me to dinner to-day, and has disappointed me. I thought to have said something more about you. I have nothing more to add, but, my dear friend, adieu.

August 12, 1714.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I THANK you for your kind letter, which is very comfortable upon such a melancholy occasion. My dear mistress's¹ days were numbered even in my imagination, and could not exceed such certain limits; but of that small number a great deal was cut off by the last troublesome scene of this contention among her servants. I believe sleep was never more welcome to a weary traveller, than death was to her; only it surprised her too suddenly before she had signed her will; which, no doubt, her being involved into so much business hindered her from finishing. It was unfortunate that she had been persuaded, as is supposed by Lowndes, that it was necessary to have it under the great seal. I have figured to myself all

¹ The Queen.

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this melancholy scene ; and even, if it be possible, worse than it has happened, twenty times ; so that I was prepared for it. My case is not half so deplorable as poor Lady Masham's, and several of the queen's servants ; some of whom have no chance for their bread but the generosity of his present majesty, which several people that know him, very much commend. So far is plain from what has happened in public affairs, that what one party has affirmed of the settlement has proved true, and that it was firm : that it was in some measure an advantage to the successor not to have been here, and so obliged to declare himself in several things, in which he is now at liberty. And indeed never any prince, in this respect, came to the crown with greater advantage. I can assure you, the peaceable scene that now appears is a disappointment to more than one set of people.

I have an opportunity calmly and philosophically to consider that treasure of vileness and baseness, that I always believe to be in the heart of man ; and to behold them exert their insolence and baseness : every new instance, instead of surprising and grieving me, as it does some of my friends, really diverts me, and in a manner improves my theory ; though I think I have not met with it in my own case, except from one man, and he was very far mistaken, for to him I would not abate one grain of my proud spirit. Dear friend, the last sentence of your letter quite kills me. Never repeat that melancholy tender word, that you will endeavour to forget me. I am sure I never can forget you, till I meet with (what is impossible) another, whose conversation I can delight so much in as Dr. Swift's ; and yet that is the smallest

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thing I ought to value you for. That hearty sincere friendship, that plain and open ingenuity in all your commerce, is what I am sure I never can find in another. Alas! I shall often want a faithful monitor, one that would vindicate me behind my back, and tell me my faults to my face. God knows I write this with tears in my eyes. Yet do not be obstinate, but come up for a little time to London; and, if you must needs go, we may concert a manner of correspondence wherever we are. I have a letter from Gay just before the queen's death. Is he not a true poet, who had not one of his own books to give to the princess, that asked for one?

August 6, 1715.

I RECEIVED your very Heraclitian letter. I am kinder than you: I desire to hear your complaints, and will always share them, when I cannot remove them. I should have the same concern for things as you were I not convinced that a comet will make much more strange revolutions upon the face of our globe, than all the petty changes that can be occasioned by governments and ministers. And you will allow it to be a matter of importance, to think of methods to save one's self and family in such a terrible shock, when this whole earth will turn upon new poles, and revolve in a new orbit. I consider myself as a poor passenger; and that the earth is not to be forsaken, nor the rocks removed from me. But you are certainly some first minister of a great monarch, who, for some misbehaviour, are condemned, in this revolution of things, to govern a chapter, and a choir of singing-men. I am sure I should think myself happy, if I had only such a province as the

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latter. Certainly your chapter is too peaceable, and not like other chapters ; else they would give you more occupation. You see I begin with philosophy. As to business, I this moment saw the dragon. He had your letters, and shewed them to me some time ago, and seems to be mighty fond of the project ; only he is to be at Wimple, and not in Herefordshire, and it is but a step farther.¹ He is to write this night, if you believe him, to that very purpose ; nay, I am to have the letter to enclose, and I intend to keep mine open till eleven. It is strange that you should imagine the dragon had cast his *exuvie* in his den,² or that confinement is a cure for inactivity ; so far from it, all these habits are ten times stronger upon him than ever. Lewis will furnish you with a collection of new stories, that are as far beyond the old ones as you can imagine. Therefore I say again, come, and you will be far from finding any such dismal scenes as you describe. Your own letter will furnish you with topics to conquer your melancholy. For in such a mutability, what is it that must not in time cast up ? Even the return of that brother³ you mention. And as philosophical as I am, I should be very sad if I did not think that very probable and feasible. As to your friends, though the world is changed to them, they are not changed to you ; and you will be caressed as much as ever, and by some that bore you no good will formerly. Do you think there is no pleasure in hearing the Hanover Club declaim upon the clemency and gentleness of the late reign, and a thousand stranger things ? As for the

¹ Alluding to the visit Swift offered him.

² He was sent to the Tower.

³ Bolingbroke.

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constitution, it is in no more danger than a strong man that has got a little surfeit by drunkenness. All will be well, and people recover their sober senses every day. Several of your friends dine with me to-day; Lady Masham, Jo. Drummond, the judge, &c.; when you will be remembered. I wish I could return your compliments as to my wife and bairns. Sure you are a very ill husband, for you had the complete thousand when you was in England, and sixpence of another thousand given by the dragon. I remember that full well. Lewis is gone his progress. I shall be at Bath in a fortnight. Come that way. Adieu.

I really think the person I recommended will do well; he will be quite another thing before Michaelmas, with Rosingrave's teaching, etc. He has a good voice.

Nov.— 1723.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE as good a right to invade your solitude as Lord Bathurst, Gay, or Pope, and you see I make use of it. I know you wish us all at the devil for robbing a moment from your vapours and vertigo. It is no matter for that; you shall have a sheet of paper every post till you come to yourself. By a paragraph in yours to Mr. Pope, I find you are in the case of the man, who held the whole night by a broom bush, and found when daylight appeared, he was within two inches of the ground. You do not seem to know how well you stand with our great folks. I myself have been at a great man's table, and have heard, out of the mouths of violent Irish Whigs, the whole table turn

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all upon your commendation. If it had not been upon the general topic of your good qualities, and the good you did, I should have grown jealous of you. My intention in this is not to expostulate, but to do you good. I know how unhappy a vertigo makes anybody that has the misfortune to be troubled with it. I might have been deep in it myself, if I had had a mind, and I will propose a cure for you, that I will pawn my reputation upon. I have of late sent several patients in that case to the Spa, to drink there of the Geronstere water, which will not carry from the spot. It has succeeded marvellously with them all. There was indeed one, who relapsed a little this last summer, because he would not take my advice, and return to his course, that had been too short the year before. But, because the instances of eminent men are most conspicuous, Lord Whitworth, our plenipotentiary, had this disease, (which, by the way is a little disqualifying for that employment;) he was so bad that he was often forced to catch hold of anything to keep him from falling. I know he was recovered by the use of that water to so great a degree, that he can ride, walk, or do anything as formerly. I leave this to your consideration. Your friends here wish to see you, and none more than myself; but I really do not advise you to such a journey to gratify them or myself; but I am almost confident, it would do you a great deal of good. The dragon is just the old man, when he is roused. He is a little deaf, but has all his other good and bad qualities just as of old. Lord B—— is much improved in knowledge, manner, and everything else. The shaver¹ is an honest friendly man as before; he has a good deal to do to smother

¹ Erasmus Lewis.

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his Welsh fire, which, you know, he has in a greater degree than some would imagine. He posts himself a good part of the year in some warm house, wins the ladies' money at ombre, and convinces them, that they are highly obliged to him. Lord and Lady Masham, Mr. Hill and Mrs. Hill, often remember you with affection.

As for your humble servant, with a great stone in his right kidney, and a family of men and women to provide for, he is as cheerful as ever. In public affairs, he has kept, as Tacitus says, *Medium iter inter vile servitium, et abruptam contumaciam*.—He never rails at a great man but to his face ; which I assure you, he has had both the opportunity and licence to do. He has some few weak friends, and fewer enemies : if any, he is low enough to be rather despised than pushed at by them. I am faithfully, dear Sir,

Your affectionate, humble servant,

J. ARBUTHNOT.

LONDON, Sept. 20, 1726.

I HAVE been balancing, dear sir, these three days, whether I should write to you first. Laying aside the superiority of your dignity, I thought a notification was due to me, as well as to two others of my friends : then I considered that this was done in the public news, with all the formalities of reception of a lord-lieutenant. I reflected on the dependency of Ireland ; but, said I, what if my friend should dispute this ? Then I considered that letters were always introduced at first from the civilized to the barbarous kingdom. In short, my affection, and the pleasure of corresponding with my dear friend, prevailed ; and,

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since you most disdainfully and barbarously confined me to two lines a-month, I was resolved to plague you with twenty times that number, though I think it was a sort of a compliment, to be supposed capable of saying anything in two lines. The Gascon asked only to speak one word to the French king, which the king confining him to, he brought a paper, and said, *signez*, and not a word more. Your negotiation with the singing man is in the hands of my daughter Nancy, who, I can assure you, will neglect nothing that concerns you; she has written about it. Mr. Pope has been in hazard of his life by drowning; coming late two weeks ago, from Lord Bolingbroke's in his coach and six, a bridge on a little river being broke down, they were obliged to go through the water, which was not too high, but the coach was overturned in it; and the glass being up, which he could not break nor get down, he was very near drowned: for the footman was stuck in the mud, and could hardly come in time to help him. He had that in common with Horace, that it was occasioned by the trunk of a tree; but it was *trunco rheda illapsa, neque Faunus ictum dextra levabat*; for he was wounded in the left hand, but, thank God, without any danger; but by the cutting of a large vessel, lost a great deal of blood. I have been with Mrs. Howard, who has a most intolerable pain in one side of her head. I had a great deal of discourse with your friend, her royal highness. She insisted upon your wit, and good conversation. I told her royal highness, that was not what I valued you for, but for being a sincere, honest man, and speaking truth when others were afraid to speak it. I have been for near three weeks together every day at the Duchess of Marlborough's, with Mr. Congreve, who

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has been like to die with a fever, and the gout in his stomach ; but he is now better, and like to do well. My brother was near being cast away going to France : there was a ship lost just by him. I write this in a dull humour, but with most sincere affection to an ungrateful man as you are, that minds everybody more than me, except what concerns my interest.

My dear friend, farewell.

LONDON, March 19, 1728-9.

THIS is the second or third time, dear sir, that I have writ to you without hearing a word of you, or from you ; only, in general, that you are very much out of order ; sometimes of your two old complaints, the vertigo and deafness, which I am very sorry for. The gentleman who carries this has come better off than I did imagine : I used my little interest as far as it would go, in his affair. He will be able to give you some account of your friends, many of whom have been in great distress this winter. John Gay, I may say with vanity, owes his life, under God, to the unwearied endeavours and care of your humble servant ; for a physician who had not been passionately his friend could not have saved him. I had, beside my personal concern for him, other motives of my care. He is now become a public person, a little Sacheverell ; and I took the same pleasure in saving him as Radcliffe did in preserving my Lord Chief Justice Holt's wife, whom he attended out of spite to the husband, who wished her dead.

The inoffensive John Gay is now become one of the obstructions to the peace of Europe, the terror of ministers, the chief author of the *Craftsman*, and all the seditious pamphlets which have been published

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against the government. He has got several turned out of their places ; the greatest ornament of the court banished from it for his sake ;¹ another great lady in danger of being *chasée* likewise ;² about seven or eight duchesses pushing forward, like the ancient circumcelliones³ in the church, who shall suffer martyrdom upon his account first. He is the darling of the city. If he should travel about the country, he would have hecatombs of roasted oxen sacrificed to him. Since he became so conspicuous Will Pulteney hangs his head, to see himself so much outdone in the career of glory. I hope he will get a good deal of money by printing his play ; but, I really believe, he would get more by shewing his person ; and I can assure you, this is the very identical John Gay, whom you formerly knew, and lodged with, in Whitehall, two years ago. I have been diverting myself with making an extract out of a history, which will be printed in the year 1948. I wish I had your assistance to go through with it ; for I can assure you, it rises to a very solemn piece of burlesque.

As to the condition of your little club, it is not quite so desperate as you might imagine ; for Mr. Pope is as high in favour, as, I am afraid, the rest are out of it. The king, upon the perusal of the last edition of his *Dunciad*, declared he was a very honest man. I did not know till this moment that I had so good an opportunity to send you a letter ; and now I know it, I am called away, and obliged to end with my best wishes and respects, being most sincerely yours, &c.

¹ The Duchess of Queensberry.

² Mrs. Howard, perhaps.

³ A sect of African heretics, who were smitten with the rage of being martyrs.

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LONDON, Jan. 13, 1732-3.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAD the pleasure of receiving one from you by Mr. Pilkington. I thank you for the opportunity it gave me of being acquainted with a very agreeable, ingenious man. I value him very much for his music, which you give yourself an air of contemning; and I think I treated him in that way to a degree of surprise.

I have had but a melancholy, sorrowful life for some time past, having lost my dear child, whose life, if it had so pleased God, I would have willingly redeemed with my own. I thank God for a new lesson of submission to his will, and likewise for what he has left me.

We have all had another loss of our worthy and dear friend Mr. Gay. It was some alleviation of my grief to see him so universally lamented by almost everybody, even by those who knew him only by reputation. He was interred at Westminster-Abbey, as if he had been a peer of the realm; and the good Duke of Queensberry, who lamented him as a brother, will set up a handsome monument upon him. These are little affronts put upon vice and injustice, and is all that remains in our power. I believe the Beggars' Opera, and what he had to come upon the stage, will make the sum of the diversions of the town for some time to come. Curll (who is one of the new terrors of death) has been writing letters to everybody for memoirs of his life. I was for sending him some, particularly an account of his disgrace at court, which, I am sure, might have been made entertaining: by which I should have attained

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two ends at once, published truth, and got a rascal whipped for it. I was overruled in this. I wish you had been here, though I think you are in a better country. I fancy to myself, that you have some virtue and honour left, some small regard for religion. Perhaps Christianity may last with you at least twenty or thirty years longer. You have no companies or stockjobbing, are yet free of excises; you are not insulted in your poverty, and told with a sneer, that you are a rich and a thriving nation. Every man that takes neither place nor pension, is not deemed with you a rogue and an enemy to his country.

Your friends of my acquaintance are in tolerable good health. Mr. Pope has his usual complaints of headache and indigestion, I think, more than formerly. He really leads sometimes a very irregular life, that is, lives with people of superior health and strength. You will see some new things of his, equal to any of his former productions. He has affixed to the new edition of his *Dunciad*, a royal declaration against the haberdashers of points and particles, assuming the titles of critics and restorers, wherein he declares, that he has revised carefully this his *Dunciad*, beginning and ending so and so, consisting of so many lines, and declares this edition to be the true reading: and it is signed by John Barber, *major civitatis Londini*.

I remember you, with your friends, who are my neighbours; they all long to see you. As for news, there is nothing here talked of but the new scheme of excise. You may remember, that a ministry in the queen's time, possessed of her majesty, the parliament, army, fleet, treasury, confederate, &c., put

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all to the test, by an experiment of a silly project in the trial of a poor parson.¹ The same game, in my mind, is playing over again, from a wantonness of power. *Miraberis quàm paucà sapientià mundus regitur.*

I have considered the grievance of your wine ; the friend that designed you good wine, was abused by an agent that he entrusted this affair to. It was not this gentleman's brother, whose name is De la Mar, to whom shew what friendship you can. My brother is getting money now, in China, less and more honestly, than his predecessors' supercargoes ; but enough to make you satisfaction, which if he comes home alive, he shall do.

My neighbour the proseman is wiser, and more cowardly and despairing than ever. He talks me into a fit of vapours twice or thrice a week. I dream at night of a chain, and rowing in the galleys. But, thank God, he has not taken from me the freedom I have been accustomed to in my discourse (even with the greatest persons to whom I have access) in defending the cause of liberty, virtue, and religion : for the last I have the satisfaction of suffering more share of the ignominy that belonged to the first confessors. This has been my lot, from a steady resolution I have taken of giving these ignorant impudent fellows battle upon all occasions. My family send you their best wishes, and a happy new year ; and none can do it more heartily than myself, who am, with the most sincere respect,

Your most faithful humble servant.

¹ Dr. Sacheverell.

BOLINGBROKE TO SWIFT

FROM LORD BOLINGBROKE.

July 13, 1714.

I NEVER laughed, my dear Dean, at your leaving the town : on the contrary, I thought the resolution of doing so, at the time when you took it, a very wise one. But I confess, I laughed, and very heartily too, when I heard that you affected to find, within the village of Letcombe, all your heart desired. In a word, I judged of you, just as you tell me in your letter that I should judge. If my grooms did not live a happier life than I have done this great while, I am sure they would quit my service. Be pleased to apply this reflection. Indeed I wish I had been with you, with Pope and Parnell, *quibus neque animi candidiores*. In a little time, perhaps, I may have leisure to be happy. I continue in the same opinions and resolutions as you left me in ; I will stand or fall by them. Adieu. No alteration in my fortune or circumstances can alter that sincere friendship with which I am, dear Dean, yours.

I fancy you will have a visit from that great politician and casuist, the duke.¹ He is at Oxford with Mr. Clarke.

August 3, 1714.

DEAR DEAN,

THE Earl of Oxford was removed on Tuesday : the queen died on Sunday. What a world is this ! and how does Fortune banter us ! John Barber tells me, you have set your face toward Ireland. Pray do not go. I am against it. But this is nothing ; John is against it. Ireland will be the scene of some

¹ Perhaps the Duke of Ormond.

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disorder, at least it will be the scene of mortification to your friends. Here everything is quiet, and will continue so. Besides which, as prosperity divided, misfortune may perhaps to some degree unite us. The Tories seem to resolve not to be crushed ; and that is enough to prevent them from being so. Pope has sent me a letter from Gay: being learned in geography, he took Binfield to be the ready way from Hanover to Whitehall. Adieu. But come to London, if you stay no longer than a fortnight. Ever yours, dear Jonathan, most sincerely.

I have lost all by the death of the queen but my spirit ; and I protest to you, I feel that increase upon me. The Whigs are a pack of Jacobites ; that shall be the cry in a month, if you please.

March 17, 1718-19.

I HAVE not these several years tasted so sensible a pleasure, as your letters of the 6th of January and 6th of February gave me ; and I know enough of the tenderness of your heart to be assured, that the letter I am writing will produce much the same effect on you. I feel my own pleasure, and I feel yours. The truest reflection, and at the same time the bitterest satire, which can be made on the present age, is this ; that to think as you think, will make a man pass for romantic. Sincerity, constancy, tenderness, are rarely to be found. They are so much out of use, that the man of mode imagines them to be out of nature. We meet with few friends ; the greatest part of those who pass for such are, properly speaking, nothing more than acquaintance ; and no wonder, since Tully's maxim is certainly true, that friendship can subsist *non nisi inter bonos*. At that

age of life, when there is balm in the blood, confidence in the mind, which the innocent heart inspires, and the experience of others destroys, I was apt to confound my acquaintance and my friends together. I never doubted but that I had a numerous cohort of the latter. I expected, if ever I fell into misfortune, to have as many and as remarkable instances of friendship to produce, as the Scythian, in one of Lucian's Dialogues, drawn from his nation. Into these misfortunes I have fallen. Thus far my propitious stars have not disappointed my expectations. The rest have almost entirely failed me. The fire of my adversity has purged the mass of my acquaintance; and, the separation made, I discover, on one side, a handful of friends, but on the other, a legion of enemies, at least of strangers. Happily this fiery trial has had an effect on me, which makes me some amends. I have found less resources in other people and more in myself, than I expected. I make good, at this hour, the motto¹ which I took nine years ago, when I was weak enough to list again under the conduct of a man² of whom nature meant to make a spy, or, at most, a captain of miners, and whom fortune, in one of her whimsical moods, made a general.

I enjoy at this hour, with very tolerable health, great tranquillity of mind. You will, I am sure, hear this with satisfaction; and sure it is, that I tell it you without the least affectation. I *live*, my friend, in a narrower circle than ever, but I *think* in a larger. When I look back on what is past, I observe a multitude of errors, but no crimes. I have been far

¹ "*Nec quærere, nec spernere, honorem.*"

² The Earl of Oxford.

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from following the advice which Cælius gave to Cicero: *Id melius est statuere quod tutius sit*; and, I think, may say to myself what Dolabella says in one of his letters to the same Cicero, *Satisfactum est jam à te, vel officio, vel familiaritati: satisfactum etiam partibus, et ei reipublicæ, quam tu probabas. Reliquum est, ubi nunc est respublica, ibi simus potius, quàm, dum illam veterem sequamur, simus in nullâ.* What my memory has furnished on this head (for I have neither books nor papers here concerning home affairs) is writ with great truth, and with as much clearness as I could give it. If ever we meet, you will, perhaps not think two or three hours absolutely thrown away in reading it. One thing I will venture to assure you of beforehand, which is, that you will think I never deserved more to be commended, than while I was the most blamed; and that you will pronounce the brightest part of my character to be that which has been disguised by the nature of things, misrepresented by the malice of men, and which is still behind a cloud. In what is passed, therefore, I find no great source of uneasiness. As to the present, my fortune is extremely reduced; but my desires are still more so. Nothing is more certain than this truth, that all our wants beyond those which a very moderate income will supply, are purely imaginary; and that his happiness is greater, and better assured, who brings his mind up to a temper of not feeling them, than his who feels them, and has wherewithal to supply them.

“—— *Vides, quæ maxima credis
Esse mala, exiguum censum, turpemque repulsam,
Quanto devites,*” &c.

HOR. Epist. i. lib. i.

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Which I paraphrased thus, not long ago, in my post-chaise :—

Survey mankind, observe what risks they run,
What fancied ills, through real dangers, shun ;
Those fancied ills, so dreadful to the great,
A lost election, or impair'd estate.
Observe the merchant, who, intent on gain,
Affronts the terrors of the Indian main ;
Though storms arise, and broken rocks appear,
He flies from poverty, and knows no other fear.
Vain men ! who might arrive, with toil far less,
By smoother paths, at greater happiness ;
For 'tis superior bliss not to desire
That trifling good which fondly you admire,
Possess precarious, and too dear acquire.
What hackney gladiator can you find,
By whom the Olympic crown would be declined ?
Who, rather than that glorious palm to seize,
With safety combat, and prevail with ease,
Would choose on some inglorious stage to tread,
And, fighting, stroll from wake to wake for bread ?

As to what is to happen, I am not anxious about it : on which subject I have twenty fine quotations at the end of my pen ; but I think it is better to own frankly to you, that upon a principle (which I have long established) we are a great deal more mechanical than our vanity will give us leave to allow. I have familiarized the worst prospects to my sight : and, by staring want, solitude, neglect, and the rest of that train, in the face, I have disarmed them of their terrors. I have heard of somebody, who, while he was in the Tower, used every morning to lie down on the block, and so act over his last scene.

Nothing disturbs me but the uncertainty of my situation, which the zeal of a few friends, and the inveteracy of a great many enemies, entertain. The more prepared I am to pass the remainder of my life in exile, the more sensibly shall I feel the pleasure

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of returning to you, if his majesty's unconditional favour (the offers of which prevented even my wishes) proves at last effectual. I cannot apply to myself, as you bid me do,—

————— *Non tibi parvum
Ingenium, non incultum est,*

and what follows; and, if ever we live in the same country together, you shall not apply to me,

————— *Quod si
Frigida curarum fomenta relinquere posses.*

I have writ to you, before I was aware of it, a long letter. The pleasure of breaking so long a silence transports me; and your sentiment is a sufficient excuse. It is not so easy to find one for talking so much about myself; but I shall want none with you upon this score. Adieu.

This letter will get safe to London; and from thence, I hope, the friend to whom I recommend it will find means of conveying it to you. For God's sake, no more apologies for your quotations, unless you mean, by accusing yourself, to correct me.

There never was a better application than yours of the story of Picrochole.¹ Things are come to that pass, the storks will never come; and they must be porters all their lives. They are something worse; for I had rather be a porter than a tool: I would sooner lend out my back to hire than my name. They are at this time the instruments of a saucy

¹ Picrochole, in Rabelais, was a dethroned monarch, who worked as a porter, but trusted the prophecy of an old woman that he should regain his kingdom on the coming of the *cocquecigrues*, or storks. The allusion here is, of course, to the Stuarts, whose intrigues were then in the hands of Cardinal Alberoni, the son of a gardener.

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gardener, who has got a gold cross on his stomach, and a red cap on his head.

A poor gentleman, who puts me often in mind of one of Scandal's pictures, in Congreve's play of "Love for Love," where a soldier is represented with his heart where his head should be, and no head at all, is the conductor of this doughty enterprise;¹ which will end in making their cause a little more desperate than it is. Again, adieu.

Let me hear from you by the same conveyance that brings you this. I am in pain about your health. From the 6th of January to the 16th of February is a long course of illness.

July 28, 1721.

I NEVER was so angry in all my life, as I was with you last week, on the receipt of your letter of the 19th of June. The extreme pleasure it gave me takes away all the excuses which I had invented for your long neglect. I design to return my humble thanks to those men of eminent gratitude and integrity, the weavers and the judges, and earnestly to entreat them, instead of tossing you in the person of your proxy, who had need to have iron ribs to endure all the drubbings you will procure him, to toss you in your proper person, the next time you offend, by going about to talk sense or to do good to the rabble. Is it possible that one of your age and profession should be ignorant, that this monstrous beast has passions to be moved, but no reason to be appealed to; and that plain truth will influence half-a-score men at most in a nation, or an age, while mystery will lead millions by the nose?

¹ The Duke of Ormond.

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Dear Jonathan, since you cannot resolve to write as you preach, what public authority allows, what councils and senates have decided to be orthodox, instead of what private opinion suggests, leave off instructing the citizens of Dublin. Believe me, there is more pleasure, and more merit too, in cultivating friendship, than in taking care of the state. Fools and knaves are generally best fitted for the last ; and none but men of sense and virtue are capable of the other. How comes it then to pass, that you, who have sense though you have wit, and virtue though you have kept bad company in your time, should be so surprised that I continue to write to you, and expect to hear from you, after seven years' absence ?

Anni prædantur euntes, say you ; and time will lop off my luxuriant branches : perhaps it will be so. But I have put the pruning hook into a hand which works hard to leave the other as little to do of that kind as may be. Some superfluous twigs are every day cut ; and as they lessen in number, the bough, which bears the golden fruit of friendship, shoots, swells, and spreads.

Our friend told you what he heard, and what was commonly said, when he told you that I had taken the fancy of growing rich. If I could have resolved to think two minutes a-day about stocks, to flatter Law half-an-hour a-week, or to have any obligation to people I neither loved nor valued, certain it is that I might have gained immensely. But not caring to follow the many bright examples of these kinds, which France furnished, and which England sent us over, I turned the little money I had of my own, without being let into any secret, very negli-

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gently ; and if I have secured enough to content me, it is because I was soon contented. I am sorry to hear you confess, that the love of money has got into your head. Take care, or it will, ere long sink into your heart, the proper seat of passions. Plato, whom you cite, looked upon riches, and the other advantages of fortune, to be desirable ; but he declared, as you have read in Diogenes Laërtius, *Ea etsi non affluerint, nihilominus tamen beatum fore sapientem*. You may think it, perhaps, hard to reconcile his two journeys into Sicily, with this maxim, especially since he got fourscore talents of the tyrant. But I can assure you, that he went to the elder Dionysius only to buy books, and to the younger only to borrow a piece of ground, and a number of men, women, and children, to try his Utopia. Aristippus was in Sicily at the same time : and there passed some Billingsgate between these reverend persons. This philosopher had a much stronger fancy to grow rich than Plato : he flattered, he cracked jests, and danced over a stick to get some of the Sicilian gold ; but still even he took care, *sibi res, non se rebus submittere*. And I remember, with great edification, how he reprov'd one of his catechumens, who blushed, and shrunk back, when his master shewed him the way to the bawdy-house. *Non ingredi turpe est, sed egredi non posse turpe est*. The conclusion of all is this ; *un honnête homme* ought to have *cent mille livres de rente*, if you please ; but a wise man will be happy with the hundredth part. Let us not refuse riches, when they offer themselves ; but let us give them no room in our heads or our hearts. Let us enjoy wealth, without suffering it to become necessary to us. And, to finish with one of Seneca's quaint sentences : " Let us

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place it so, that fortune may take it without tearing it from us." The passage you mention does follow that which I quoted to you, and the advice is good. Solon thought so ; nay, he went farther ; and you remember the reason he gave for sitting in the council of Pisistratus, whom he had done his utmost to oppose, and who, by the way, proved a very good prince. But the epistle is not writ by Cicero, as you seem to think. It is, if I mistake not, an epistle of Dolabella to him. Cato, you say, would not be of the same mind. Cato is a most venerable name, and Dolabella was but a scoundrel with wit and valour ; and yet there is better sense, nay, there is more virtue, in what Dolabella advises, than in the conduct of Cato. I must own my weakness to you. This Cato, so sung by Lucan in every page, and so much better sung by Virgil in half a line, strikes me with no great respect. When I see him painted in all the glorious colours which eloquence furnishes, I call to mind that image of him which Tully gives in one of his letters to Atticus, or to somebody else ; where he says, that having a mind to keep a debate from coming on in the senate, they made Cato rise to speak, and that he talked till the hour of proposing matters was over. Tully insinuates that they often made this use of him. Does not the moving picture shift ? Do you not behold Clarke of Taunton-Dean, in the gown of a Roman senator, sending out the members to piss ? The censor used sharp medicines ; but, in his time, the patient had strength to bear them. The second Cato inherited this receipt without his skill ; and like a true quack, he gave the remedy, because it was his only one, though it was too late. He hastened the patient's death ; he not

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only hastened it, he made it more convulsive and painful.

The condition of your wretched country is worse than you represent it to be. The healthful Indian follows his master, who died of sickness, to the grave; but I much doubt whether those charitable legislators exact the same, when the master is a lunatic, and cuts his own throat. I mourn over Ireland with all my heart, but I pity you more. In reading your letter, I feel your pulse; and I judge of your distemper as surely by the figures into which you cast your ink, as the learned doctor at "The hand and urinal" could do, if he pored over your water. You are really in a very bad way. You say your memory declines; I believe it does, since you forget your friends, and since repeated importunity can hardly draw a token of remembrance from you. There are bad airs for the mind, as well as the body: and what do you imagine, that Plato, since you have set me upon quoting him (who thanked Heaven, that he was not a Bœotian), would have said of the *ultima Thule*? Shake off your laziness, ramble over hither, and spend some months in a kinder climate. You will be in danger of meeting but one plague here, and you will leave many behind you. Here you will come among people, who lead a life singular enough to hit your humour: so near the world, as to have all its conveniences; so far from the world, as to be strangers to all its inconveniences; wanting nothing which goes to the ease and happiness of life; embarrassed by nothing which is cumbersome. I dare almost venture to say, that you will like us better than the persons you live with, and that we shall be able to make you retrograde (that I may use a

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canonical simile), as the sun did on the dial of Hezekiah, and begin anew the twelve years which you complain are gone. We will restore to you the *nigros angusto fronte capillos*; and with them, the *dulce loqui*, the *ridere decorum*, et *inter vina fugam Cynaræ mærerere protervæ*. *Hæc est vita solutorum miserâ ambitione gravique*, and not yours.

I was going to finish with my sheet of paper; but having bethought myself, that you deserve some more punishment, and calling all my anger against you to my aid, I resolve, since I am this morning in the humour of scribbling, to make my letter at least as long as one of your sermons; and, if you do not mend, my next shall be as long as one of Dr. Manton's, who taught my youth to yawn, and prepared me to be a High-Churchman, that I might never hear him read, nor read him more.

You must know, that I am as busy about my hermitage which is between the chateau and the maison bourgeoise, as if I was to pass my life in it: and if I could see you now and then, I should be willing enough to do so. I have in my wood the biggest and the clearest spring perhaps in Europe, which forms, before it leaves the park, a more beautiful river than any which flows in Greek or Latin verse. I have a thousand projects about this spring, and, among others, one which will employ some marble. Now marble, you know, makes one think of inscriptions; and if you will correct this, which I have not yet committed to paper, it shall be graved, and help to fill the tablebooks of Spons and Missons yet to come.

“Propter fidem adversus Reginam, et Partes,
Intemeratè servatam,

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Propter operam in pace generali conciliandâ
 Strenuè saltem navatam,
 Impotentia vesanæ factionis
 Solum vertere coactus,
 Hic ad aquæ lene caput sacræ
 Injustè exulat,
 Dulce vivit,
 H. De B. An." &c.

Ob were better than *propter*, but *ob operam* would never please the ear. In a proper place, before the front of the house, which I have new built, I have a mind to inscribe this piece of patchwork :—

“ Si respiscat patria, in patriam rediturus ;
 Si non respiscat, ubivis melius quam inter
 Tales cives futurus,
 Hanc villam instauro et oxorno :
 Hinc, velut ex portu, alienos casus
 Et fortunæ ludum insolentem
 Cernere suave est.
 Hic, mortem nec appetens nec timens,
 Innocuis deliciis,
 Docta quiete,
 et
 Felicis animi immotâ tranquillitate,
 Fruiscor.
 Hic mihi vivam quod superest aut exilii,
 Aut ævi.”

If in a year's time you should find leisure to write to me, send me some mottoes for groves, and streams, and fine prospects, and retreat, and contempt of grandeur, &c. I have one for my greenhouse, and one for an alley which leads to my apartment, which are happy enough. The first is, *Hic ver assiduum, atque alienis mensibus ætas*. The other is—*fallentis semita vitæ*.

You see I amuse myself *de la bagatelle* as much as you ; but here lies the difference ; your *bagatelle* leads to something better ; as fiddlers flourish carelessly,

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before they play a fine air, but mine begins, proceeds, and ends in *bagatelle*.

Adieu : it is happy for you that my hand is tired.

I will take care that you shall have my picture, and I am simple enough to be obliged to you for asking for it. If you do not write to me soon, I hope it will fall down as soon as you have it, and break your head.

n. d.

I AM not so lazy as Pope, and therefore you must not expect from me the same indulgence to laziness ; in defending his own cause he pleads yours, and becomes your advocate while he appeals to you as his judge : You will do the same on your part ; and I, and the rest of your common friends, shall have great justice to expect from two such righteous tribunals : You resemble perfectly the two alehouse-keepers in Holland, who were at the same time burgomasters of the town, and taxed one another's bills alternately. I declare beforehand I will not stand to the award ; my title to your friendship is good, and wants neither deeds nor writings to confirm it ; but annual acknowledgments at least are necessary to preserve it : and I begin to suspect, by your defrauding me of them, that you hope in time to dispute it, and to urge prescription against me. I would not say one word to you about myself (since it is a subject on which you appear to have no curiosity) were it not to try how far the contrast between Pope's fortune and manner of life, and mine, may be carried.

I have been, then, infinitely more uniform, and less dissipated, than when you knew me and cared for me.

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That love which I used to scatter with some profusion among the female kind, has been these many years devoted to one subject.¹ A great many misfortunes, (for so they are called, though sometimes very improperly,) and a retirement from the world, have made that just and nice discrimination between my acquaintance and my friends, which we have seldom sagacity enough to make for ourselves: those insects of various hues, which used to hum and buzz about me while I stood in the sunshine, have disappeared since I lived in the shade. No man comes to a hermitage but for the sake of the hermit; a few philosophical friends come often to mine, and they are such as you would be glad to live with, if a dull climate and duller company have not altered you extremely from what you were nine years ago.

The hoarse voice of party was never heard in this quiet place; gazettes and pamphlets are banished from it, and if the lucubrations of Isaac Bickerstaff be admitted, this distinction is owing to some strokes by which it is judged that this illustrious philosopher had (like the Indian Fohu, the Grecian Pythagoras, the Persian Zoroaster, and others his precursors among the Zabians, Magians, and the Egyptian seers) both his outward and his inward doctrine, and that he was of no side at the bottom. When I am there, I forget I ever was of any party myself; nay, I am often so happily absorbed by the abstracted reason of things, that I am ready to imagine there never was any such monster as party. Alas, I am soon awakened from that pleasing dream by the Greek and Roman historians, by Guicciardine, by Machiavel, and Thuanus; for I have vowed to read no history

¹ His second wife, niece to Madame Maintenon.

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of our own country, till that body of it which you promise to finish appears.

I am under no apprehensions that a glut of study and retirement should cast me back into the hurry of the world ; on the contrary, the single regret which I ever feel, is, that I fell so late into this course of life ; my philosophy grows confirmed by habit, and if you and I meet again, I will extort this approbation from you. *Jam non consilio bonus, sed more eo perductus, ut non tantum recte facere possim, sed nisi recte facere non possim.* The little incivilities I have met with from opposite sets of people, have been so far from rendering me violent or sour to any, that I think myself obliged to them all : some have cured me of my fears, by shewing me how impotent the malice of the world is ; others have cured me of my hopes by shewing how precarious popular friendships are ; all have cured me of surprise. In driving me out of party, they have driven me out of cursed company ; and in stripping me of titles, and rank, and estate, and such trinkets, which every man that will may spare, they have given me that which no man can be happy without.

Reflection and habit have rendered the world so indifferent to me, that I am neither afflicted nor rejoiced, angry nor pleased, at what happens in it, any further than personal friendships interest me in the affairs of it, and this principle extends my cares but a little way. Perfect tranquillity is the general tenor of my life : good digestions, serene weather, and some other mechanic springs, wind me above it now and then, but I never fall below it ; I am sometimes gay, but I am never sad ; I have gained new friends, and have lost some old ones ; my acquisitions

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of this kind give me a good deal of pleasure, because they have not been made lightly. I know no vows so solemn as those of friendship, and therefore a pretty long noviciate of acquaintance should methinks precede them ; my losses of this kind give me but little trouble ; I contributed nothing to them ; and a friend who breaks with me unjustly is not worth preserving. As soon as I leave this town, (which will be in a few days,) I shall fall back into that course of life, which keeps knaves and fools at a great distance from me : I have an aversion to them both ; but in the ordinary course of life, I think I can bear the sensible knave better than the fool : One must, indeed, with the former, be in some or other of the attitudes of those wooden men whom I have seen before a sword-cutler's shop in Germany ; but even in these constrained postures, the witty rascal will divert me : and he that diverts me does me a great deal of good, and lays me under an obligation to him ; which I am not obliged to pay in other coin : the fool obliges me to be almost as much upon my guard as the knave, and he makes me no amends ; he numbs me like the torpor, or he teazes me like the fly. This is the picture of an old friend, and more like him than that will be which you once asked, and which he will send you, if you continue still to desire it.—Adieu, dear Swift, with all thy faults I love thee entirely ; make an effort and love me on with all mine.

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TO THE THREE YAHOO'S OF TWICKENHAM,
JONATHAN, ALEXANDER, JOHN [Gay].

MOST EXCELLENT TRIUMVIRS OF PARNASSUS,

THOUGH you are probably very indifferent where I am, or what I am doing, yet I resolve to believe the contrary. I persuade myself, that you have sent at least fifteen times within this fortnight to Dawley farm,¹ and that you are extremely mortified at my long silence. To relieve you therefore from this great anxiety of mind, I can do no less than write a few lines to you; and I please myself beforehand with the vast pleasure which the epistle must needs give you. That I may add to this pleasure, and give you farther proofs of my beneficent temper, I will likewise inform you, that I shall be in your neighbourhood again by the end of next week; by which time I hope that Jonathan's imagination of business, will be succeeded by some imagination more becoming a professor of that divine science, *la bagatelle*. Adieu, Jonathan, Alexander, John! Mirth be with you.

From the Banks of the Severn,
July 23, 1726.

March 29, 1731.

I HAVE delayed several posts answering your letter of January last, in hopes of being able to speak to you about a project which concerns us both, but me the most, since the success of it would bring us together. It had been a good while in my head, and at my heart; if it can be set a-going, you shall hear of it. I was ill in the beginning of the winter, for

¹ His own country residence.

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near a week, but in no danger either from the nature of my distemper, or from the attendance of three physicians. Since that bilious intermitting fever, I have had, as I had before, better health than the regard I have paid to health deserves. We are both in the decline of life, my dear Dean, and have been some years going down the hill; let us make the passage as smooth as we can. Let us fence against physical evil by care, and the use of those means which experience must have pointed out to us: let us fence against moral evil by philosophy. I renounce the alternative you propose. But we may, nay, (if we will follow nature, and do not work up imagination against her plainest dictates,) we shall of course grow every year more indifferent to life, and to the affairs and interests of a system out of which we are soon to go. This is much better than stupidity. The decay of passion strengthens philosophy, for passion may decay and stupidity not succeed. Passions (says Pope, our divine, as you will see one time or other) are the gales of life; let us not complain that they do not blow a storm. What hurt does age do us, in subduing what we toil to subdue all our lives? It is now six in the morning; I recall the time (and am glad it is over) when about this hour I used to be going to bed, surfeited with pleasure, or jaded with business: my head often full of schemes, and my heart as often full of anxiety. Is it a misfortune, think you, that I rise at this hour, refreshed, serene, and calm? that the past, and even the present affairs of life stand like objects at a distance from me, where I can keep off the disagreeable, so as not to be strongly affected by them, and from whence I can draw the others nearer to me? Passions in their force

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would bring all these, nay, even future contingencies about my ears at once, and reason would but ill defend me in the scuffle.

I leave Pope to speak for himself, but I must tell you how much my wife is obliged to you. She says she would find strength enough to nurse you, if you were here, and yet, God knows, she is extremely weak: the slow fever works under, and mines the constitution; we keep it off sometimes, but still it returns, and makes new breaches before nature can repair the old ones. I am not ashamed to say to you, that I admire her more every hour of my life: Death is not to her the king of terrors; she beholds him without the least. When she suffers much, she wishes for him as a deliverer from pain: when life is tolerable, she looks on him with dislike because he is to separate her from those friends to whom she is more attached than to life itself. You shall not stay for my next as long as you have for this letter; and in every one Pope shall write something much better than the scraps of old philosophers, which were the presents, munuscula, that stoical fop Seneca used to send in every epistle to his friend Lucilius.

July 18, 1732.

I WRITE this letter, in hopes that Pope, a man scattered in the world, (according to the French phrase,) will soon procure me an opportunity of conveying it safely to you, my reverend dean. For my own part, half this wicked nation might go to you, or half your beggarly nation might come to us, and the whole migration be over before I knew anything of the matter. My letter will concern neither affairs of state, nor of party; and yet I would not have it fall

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into the hands of our ministers ; it might pass in their excellent noddles for a piece of a plot against themselves, if not against the state ; or, at least, it might furnish them with an opportunity of doing an ill-natured, and disappointing a good-natured thing ; which being a pleasure to the malicious and the base, I should be sorry to give it on any occasion, and especially on this, to the *par nobile fratrum*.¹

After this preamble, I proceed to tell you, that there is in my neighbourhood, in Berkshire, a clergyman, one Mr. Talbot, related to the solicitor-general, and protected by him. This man has now the living of Burfield, which the late Bishop of Durham held before, and, for aught I know, after he was Bishop of Oxford. The living is worth four hundred pounds *per annum*, over and above a curate paid, as Mr. Correy, a gentleman who does my business in that country, and who is a very grave authority, assures me. The parsonage house is extremely good, the place pleasant, and the air excellent, the distance from London a little day's journey, and from hence (give me leave to think this circumstance of some importance to you) not much above half a day's, even for you who are no great jockey. Mr. Talbot has many reasons, which make him desirous to settle in Ireland for the rest of his life, and has been looking out for a change of preferments some time. As soon as I heard this, I employed one to know whether he continued in the same mind, and to tell him, that an advantageous exchange might be offered him, if he could engage his kinsman to make it practicable at court. He answered for his own acceptance, and his kinsman's endeavours. I employed next some friends

¹ Sir Robert Walpole, and his brother Horace.

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to secure my Lord Dorset, who very frankly declared himself ready to serve you in anything, and in this if you desired it. But he mentioned a thing, at the same time, wholly unknown to me, which is, that your deanery is not in the nomination of the crown, but in the election of the chapter. This may render our affairs perhaps more easy ; more hard, I think, it cannot be ; but in all cases, it requires other measures to be taken. One of these, I believe, must be, to prepare Hoadly, Bishop of Salisbury, if that be possible, to prepare his brother the Archbishop of Dublin. The light, in which the proposition must be represented to him and our ministers (if it be made to them) is this : that though they gratify you, they gratify you in a thing advantageous to themselves, and silly in you to ask. I suppose it will not be hard to persuade them, that it is better for them you should be a private parish priest in an English county, than a dean in the metropolis of Ireland, where they know, because they have felt, your authority and influence. At least, this topic is a plausible one for those who speak to them, to insist upon, and coming out of a whig mouth may have weight. Sure I am, they will be easily persuaded, that quitting power for ease, and a greater for a less revenue, is a foolish bargain, which they should by consequence help you to make.

You see now the state of this whole affair, and you will judge better than I am able to do, of the means to be employed on your side of the water: as to those on this, nothing shall be neglected. Find some secure way of conveying your thoughts and your commands to me; for my friend has a right to command me arbitrarily, which no man else upon earth has. Or rather, dispose of affairs so as to come hither immedi-

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ately. You intended to come some time ago. You speak, in a letter Pope has just now received from you, as if you still had in view to make this journey before winter. Make it in the summer, and the sooner the better. To talk of being able to ride with stirrups, is trifling : get on Pegasus, bestride the hippogryph, or mount the white nag in the Revelation. To be serious ; come anyhow, and put neither delay nor humour in a matter which requires dispatch and management. Though I have room, I will not say one word to you about Berkeley's or Delany's book. Some part of the former is hard to be understood ; none of the latter is to be read. I propose, however, to reconcile you to metaphysics by showing how they may be employed against metaphysicians ; and that whenever you do not understand them, nobody else does, no, not those who write them.

I know you are inquisitive about the health of the poor woman who inhabits this place ; it is tolerable, better than it has been some years. Come and see her ; you shall be nursed, fondled, and humoured. She desires you to accept this assurance, with her humble service. Your horses shall be grazed in summer, and fothered in winter ; and you and your man shall have meat, drink, and lodging. Washing I cannot afford, Mr. Dean ; for I am grown saving, thanks to your sermon about frugality.

April 12, 1734.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

I HAVE received yours of the 16th of February very lately ; but have not yet seen the person who brought it, nor am likely to see him, unless he finds

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me out in my retreat. Our friend Pope is in town, and to him I send this letter ; for he tells me, he can forward it to you by the hands of one of our common friends. If I can do Mr. Faulkner any service, I shall certainly do it, because I shall catch at any opportunity of pleasing you ; but my help, in a project of subscription, will, I fear, avail him little. I live much out of the world, and I do not blush to own, that I am out of fashion in it. My wife, who is extremely obliged to you for your kind remembrance of her, and who desires me to say all the fond things from her to you, which I know she thinks, enjoys a precarious health, easily shaken, and sometimes interrupted by fits of severe pain ; but, upon the whole, much better than it has been these five years. I walk down hill easily and leisurely enough, except when a strong disposition to the jaundice (that I have long carried about me) gives me a shove. I guard against it as well as I can ; the censors say, not as well as I might. Too sedentary a life hurts me, and yet I do not care to lead any other : for sauntering about my grounds is not exercise. I say, I will be very active this summer, and I will try to keep my word. Riding is your *panacea* ; and Bathurst is younger than his sons by observing the same regimen. If I can keep where I am a few years longer, I shall be satisfied ; for I have something, and not much, to do before I die. I know by experience one cannot serve the present age. About posterity one may flatter one's self, and I have a mind to write to the next age. You have seen, I doubt not, the ethic epistles, and though they go a little into metaphysics, I persuade myself you both understand and approve them ; the first book being finished, the others will soon follow ; for many of

BOLINGBROKE TO SWIFT

them are writ, or crayoned out. What are you doing? Good, I am sure. But of what kind? Pray, Mr. Dean, be a little more cautious in your recommendations. I took care, a year ago, to remove some obstacles that might have hindered the success of one of your recommendations, and I have heartily repented of it since. The fellow wants morals, and, as I hear, decency sometimes. You have had accounts, I presume, which will not leave you at a loss to guess whom I mean. Is there no hope left of seeing you once more in this island? I often wish myself out of it; and I shall wish so much more, if it is impossible *de voisiner* (I know no English word to say the same thing) with you. Adieu, dear Sir; no man living preserves a higher esteem, or a more warm and sincere friendship for you, than I do.

(Postscript to a Letter from Pope.)

Sept. 15, 1734.

OUR friend, who is just returned from a progress of three months, and is setting out in three days with me for the Bath, where he will stay till toward the middle of October, left this letter with me yesterday, and I cannot seal and dispatch it till I have scribbled the remainder of this page full. He talks very pompously of my metaphysics, and places them in a very honourable station. It is true I have writ six letters and a half to him on subjects of that kind, and I propose a letter and a half more, which would swell the whole up to a considerable volume. But he thinks me fonder of the name of an author than I am. When he and you, and one or two other friends have seen them, *satis magnum theatrum mihi estis*, I shall not

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have the itch of making them more public. I know how little regard you pay to writings of this kind ; but I imagine that if you can like any such, it must be those that strip metaphysics of all their bombast, keep within the sight of every well-constituted eye, and never bewilder themselves while they pretend to guide the reason of others. I writ to you a long letter some time ago and sent it by the post. Did it come to your hands ? or did the inspectors of private correspondence stop it, to revenge themselves of the ill said of them in it ? *Vale, et me ama.*

BOLINGBROKE.

LETTERS FROM ADDISON

TO SWIFT.

ST. JAMES'S PLACE, April 11, 1710.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE run so much in debt with you, that I do not know how to excuse myself, and therefore shall throw myself wholly upon your good nature; and promise, if you will pardon what is past, to be more punctual with you for the future. I hope to have the happiness of waiting on you very suddenly at Dublin, and do not at all regret the leaving of England, while I am going to a place where I shall have the satisfaction and honour of Dr. Swift's conversation. I shall not trouble you with any occurrences here, because I hope to have the pleasure of talking over all affairs with you very suddenly. We hope to be at Holyhead by the 30th instant. Lady Wharton stays in England. I suppose you know that I obeyed yours and the Bishop of Clogher's commands, in relation to Mr. Smith; for I desired Mrs. Dawson to acquaint you with it. I must beg my most humble duty to the Bishop of Clogher. I heartily long to eat a dish of bacon and beans in the best company in the world. Mr. Steele and I often drink your health.

I am forced to give myself airs of a punctual corre-

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

spondence with you in discourse with your friends at St. James' Coffeehouse, who are always asking me questions about you, when they have a mind to pay their court to me, if I may use so magnificent a phrase. Pray, dear Doctor, continue your friendship towards me, who love and esteem you, if possible, as much as you deserve.

I am ever, dear sir, yours entirely,

J. ADDISON.

DUBLIN CASTLE, June 3, 1710.

DEAR SIR,

I AM just now come from Finglass, where I have been drinking your health, and talking of you, with one who loves and admires you better than any man in the world, except your humble servant. We both agree in a request, that you will set out for Dublin as soon as possible. To tell you truly, I find the place disagreeable, and cannot imagine why it should appear so now more than it did last year. You know I look upon everything that is like a compliment as a breach of friendship; and therefore shall only tell you, that I long to see you; without assuring you, that I love your company and value your conversation more than any man's, or that I am, with the most inviolable sincerity and esteem, dear sir,

Your most faithful, most humble,

And most obedient servant,

J. ADDISON.

ADDISON TO SWIFT

March 20, 1717-18.

DEAR SIR,

MULTIPLICITY of business, and a long dangerous fit of sickness, have prevented me from answering the obliging letter you honoured me with some time since ; but, God be thanked, I cannot make use of either of these excuses at present, being entirely free both of my office¹ and my asthma. I dare not, however, venture myself abroad yet, but have sent the contents of your last to a friend² of mine (for he is very much so, though he is my successor), who I hope will turn it to the advantage of the gentleman whom you mention. I know you have so much zeal and pleasure in doing kind offices to those you wish well to, that I hope you represent the hardship of the case in the strongest colours that it can possibly bear. However, as I always honoured you for your good nature, which is a very odd quality to celebrate in a man who has talents so much more shining in the eyes of the world, I should be glad if I could any way concur with you in putting a stop to what you say is now in agitation.

I must here condole with you upon the loss of that excellent man, the bishop of Derry, who has scarcely left behind him his equal in humanity, agreeable conversation, and all kinds of learning. We have often talked of you with great pleasure ; and upon this occasion I cannot but reflect upon myself, who, at the same time that I omit no opportunity of expressing my esteem for you to others, have been so negligent in doing it to yourself. I have several

¹ Secretary of State.

² James Craggs, Esq.

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times taken up my pen to write to you, but have always been interrupted by some impertinence or other ; and, to tell you unreservedly, I have been unwilling to answer so agreeable a letter, as that I received from you, with one written in form only ; but I must still have continued silent, had I deferred writing till I could have made a suitable return. Shall we never again talk together in laconic ? Whenever you see England, your company will be the most acceptable in the world at Holland House, where you are highly esteemed by Lady Warwick and the young Lord ; though by none anywhere more than by,

Sir, your most faithful,

And most humble and obedient servant,

J. /ADDISON.

BRISTOL, Oct. 1, 1718.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE received the honour of your letter at Bristol, where I have just finished a course of water-drinking, which I hope has pretty well recovered me from the leavings of my last winter's sickness. As for the subject of your letter, though you know an affair of that nature cannot well nor safely be trusted in writing, I desired a friend of mine to acquaint Sir Ralph Gore, that I was under a pre-engagement, and not at my own choice to act in it ; and have since troubled my Lady Ashe with a letter to the same effect, which I hope has not miscarried. However, upon my return to London, I will further inquire into that matter, and see if there is any room left for me to negotiate as you propose.

ADDISON TO SWIFT

I still live in hopes of seeing you in England ; and if you would take my house at Bilton in your way, (it lies upon the road within a mile of Rugby,) I would strive hard to meet you there, provided you would make me happy in your company for some days. The greatest pleasure I have met with for some months, is in the conversation of my old friend, Dr. Smalridge, who, since the death of the excellent man you mention, is to me the most candid and agreeable of all bishops ; I would say, clergymen, were not deans comprehended under that title. We have often talked of you ; and when I assure you he has an exquisite taste of writing, I need not tell you how he talks on such a subject. I look upon it as my good fortune, that I can express my esteem of you, even to those who are not of the bishop's party, without giving offence. When a man has so much compass in his character, he affords his friends topics enough to enlarge upon, that all sides admire. I am sure a zealous sincere and friendly behaviour distinguishes you as much as your many more shining talents ; and as I have received particular instances of it, you must have a very bad opinion of me, if you do not think I heartily love and respect you ; and that I am ever, dear sir,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

J. ADDISON.

TO THE EARL OF WARWICK (*afterwards his stepson*).

SANDY-END, May 20, 1708.

MY DEAR LORD,

I HAVE employed the whole neighbourhood in looking after birds' nests, and not altogether without

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

success. My man found one last night ; but it proved a hen's with fifteen eggs in it, covered with an old broody duck, which may satisfy your Lordship's curiosity a little, though I am afraid the eggs will be of little use to us. This morning I have news brought me of a nest that has abundance of little eggs, streaked with red and blue veins, that, by the description they give me, must make a very beautiful figure on a string. My neighbours are very much divided in their opinions upon them : some say they are a sky-lark's ; others will have them to be a canary-bird's ; but I am much mistaken in the colour and turn of the eggs, if they are not full of tom-tits. If your Lordship does not make haste, I am afraid they will be birds before you see them ; for, if the account they gave me of them be true, they cannot have above two days more to reckon.

Since I am so near your Lordship, methinks, after having passed the day among more severe studies, you may often take a trip hither, and relax yourself with these little curiosities of nature. I assure you, no less a man than Cicero commends the two great friends of his age, Scipio and Lælius, for entertaining themselves at their country-house, which stood on the sea-shore, with picking up cockle-shells, and looking after birds' nests. For which reason I shall conclude this learned letter with a saying of the same author in his treatise of Friendship : "*Absint autem tristitia et in omni re severitas ; habent illæ quidem gravitatem ; sed amicitia debet esse lenior et remissior, et ad omnem suavitatem facilitatemque morum proclivior.*" If your Lordship understands the elegance and sweetness of these words, you may assure yourself you are no ordinary Latinist, but if they have force enough

ADDISON TO EARL WARWICK

to bring you to Sandy-End, I shall be very well pleased.

I am, my dear Lord,
Your Lordship's most affectionate,
And most obedient servant,
J. ADDISON.

SANDY-END, May 27, 1708.

MY DEAREST LORD,

I CANNOT forbear being troublesome to your Lordship whilst I am in your neighbourhood. The business of this is, to invite you to a concert of music, which I have found out in a neighbouring wood. It begins precisely at six in the evening, and consists of a blackbird, a thrush, a robin-redbreast, and a bullfinch. There is a lark that, by way of overture, sings and mounts till she is almost out of hearing, and afterwards, falling down leisurely, drops to the ground as soon as she has ended her song. The whole is concluded by a nightingale, that has a much better voice than Mrs. Tofts, and something of the Italian manner in her divisions. If your Lordship will honour me with your company, I will promise to entertain you with much better music, and more agreeable scenes, than ever you met with at the opera; and will conclude with a charming description of a nightingale, out of our friend Virgil:

*Qualis populeâ mœrens Philomela sub umbrâ
Amissos queritur fœtus, quos durus arator
Observans nido implumes detraxit; at illa
Flet noctem, ramoque sedens, miserabile carmen
Integrat, et mœstis late loca questibus implet.*

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So, close in poplar shades, her children gone,
The mother-nightingale laments alone ;
Whose nest some prying churl had found, and thence
By stealth convey'd th' unfeather'd innocence.
But she supplies the night with mournful strains,
And melancholy music fills the plains.—DRYDEN.

Your Lordship's most obedient,

J. ADDISON.

SANDY-END, May 30, 1708.

DEAR SIR,

IF you are at leisure I will desire you to inquire in any bookseller's shop for a Statius, and to look in the beginning of the Achilleid for a bird's nest, which, if I am not mistaken, is very finely described. It comes in I think by way of simile towards the beginning of the book, where the poet compares Achilles's mother looking after a proper seat to conceal her son in, to a bird searching after a fit place for a nest. If you find it send it me, or bring it yourself, and as you acquit yourself of this you may perhaps be troubled with more poetical commissions from,

Sir, your most faithful,

Humble servant,

J. ADDISON.

My hearty service to Dr. Swift. The next time you come bring a coach early that we may take the air in it.

TO CHARLES MONTAGU, ESQ., CHANCELLOR OF
THE EXCHEQUER.

OXFORD, 1697.

YOU whose ears are bedinn'd by such a mob of vile poets, will hardly complain that anything unusual

ADDISON TO CONGREVE

has happened to you, when you find my strains likewise maltreating a noble theme. How much the Britons excel in martial prowess is proved by the glory of our recent deeds, but that we do not shine in the more polished studies of peace, is evidenced by the verses which we have lately produced. Were it not that your friend Congreve has treated the subject with his usual poetic fire, we should have had little cause to rejoice in a piece so wretchedly sung by such worthless poets. But whilst I blame others, I seem to be forgetting myself; I who am perhaps causing you more annoyance by my Latin verses than they by their vernacular; excepting that the difference of the torture may afford some alleviation to your sufferings. Never indeed could I be induced to submit a poem written in my native language to the eyes of one like you, who deter all others from such attempts by your writing no less than you excite them by your favour.

The devoted admirer of your accomplishments,

JOSEPH ADDISON.

TO CONGREVE.

BLOIS, December, 1699.

DEAR SIR,

I WAS very sorry to hear in your last letter that you were so terribly afflicted with the gout, though for your comfort I believe you are the first English poet that has been complimented with the distemper: I was myself at that time sick of a fever, which I believe proceeded from the same cause; but at

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present I am so well recovered that I can scarce forbear beginning my letter with Tully's preface, "*Si vales bene est, ego quidem valeo.*" You must excuse me for giving you a line of Latin now and then, since I find myself in some danger of losing the tongue, for I perceive a new language, like a new mistress, is apt to make a man forget all his old ones. I assure you I met with a very remarkable instance of this nature at Paris, in a poor Irishman that had lost the little English he had brought over with him, without being able to learn any French in its stead. I asked him what language he spoke : he very innocently answered me, "No language, Monsieur : " which, as I afterwards found, were all the words he was master of in both tongues. I am at present in a town where all the languages in Europe are spoken except English, which is not to be heard I believe within fifty miles of the place. My greatest diversion is to run over in my thoughts the variety of noble scenes I was entertained with before I came hither. I do not believe, as good a poet as you are, that you can make finer landscapes than those about the king's houses, or with all your descriptions build a more magnificent palace than Versailles. I am, however, so singular as to prefer Fontainebleau to all the rest. It is situated among rocks and woods that give you a fine variety of savage prospects. The king has humoured the genius of the place, and only made use of so much art as is necessary to help and regulate nature without reforming her too much. The cascades seem to break through the clefts and cracks of rocks, that are covered over with moss, and look as if they were piled upon one another by accident. There is an artificial wildness in the meadows, walks, and canals,

ADDISON TO CONGREVE

and the garden, instead of a wall, is fenced on the lower end by a natural mound of rockwork, that strikes the eye very agreeably. For my part, I think there is something more charming in these rude heaps of stone than in so many statues, and would as soon see a river winding through woods and meadows as when it is tossed up in such a variety of figures at Versailles. But I begin to talk like Dr. Lister. To pass therefore from works of nature to those of art; in my opinion the pleasantest part of Versailles is the gallery. Every one sees on each side of it something that will be sure to please him, for one of them commands a view of the finest garden in the world, and the other is wainscoted with looking-glass. The history of the present king, till the year 16, is painted on the roof by Le Brun, so that his Majesty has actions enough by him to furnish another gallery much longer than the first. He is represented with all the terror and majesty that you can imagine, in every part of the picture, and sees his young face as perfectly drawn in the roof as his present one in the side. The painter has represented his most Christian Majesty under the figure of Jupiter throwing thunderbolts all about the ceiling, and striking terror into the Danube and Rhine, that lie astonished and blasted with lightning a little above the cornice. I believe by this time you are afraid I shall carry you from room to room and lead you through the whole palace; truly, if I had not tired you already, I could not forbear showing you a staircase that they say is the noblest in its kind: but after so tedious a letter I shall conclude with a petition to you, that you would deliver the enclosed to Mr. Montagu, for I am afraid

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of interrupting him with my impertinence when he is engaged in more serious affairs.

Tu faciles aditus et mollia tempora nôvis,

I am, &c.,

J. ADDISON.

TO MR. STANYAN.

BLOIS, February, 1700.

DEAR SIR,

I THANK you for the news and poetry you were pleased to send me, though I must confess I did not like either of them. The votes had too much fire in them, and the verses none at all : however, I hope the first will prove as harmless to the ministers of state as the others are to the knights of the toast. It is the first speech of Sir John Falstaff's that did not please me, but truly I think the merry knight is grown very dull since his being in the other world. I really think myself very much obliged to you for your directions, and if you would be a little particular in the names of the treaties that you mention, I should have reason to look upon your correspondence as the luckiest adventure I am like to meet with in all my travels. The place where I am at present, by reason of its situation on the Loire and its reputation for the language, is very much infested with fogs and German counts. These last are a kind of gentlemen that are just come wild out of their country, and more noisy and senseless than any I have yet had the honour to be acquainted with. They are at the cabaret from morning to night, and I suppose come into France on no other account but to drink. To

ADDISON TO MR. MONTAGU

make some amends for all this, there is not a word of English spoken in the whole town, so that I shall be in danger of losing my mother-tongue, unless you give me leave to practise it on you sometimes in a letter. I might here be very troublesome to you with my acknowledgments, but I hope there is no need of any formal professions to assure you that I shall always be, dear sir, &c.,

J. ADDISON.

To Abraham Stanyan, Esq.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

CHATEAU-DUN, July 23, 1700.

DEAR SIR,

I AM now at Chateau-dun, where I shall expect your company or a letter from you with some impatience. Here is one of the prettiest views in the world, if that can tempt you, and a ruin of about four-score houses, which I know you would think a pleasanter prospect than the other, if it was not so modern. The inhabitants tell you the fire that has been the occasion of it was put out by a miracle; and that in its full rage it immediately ceased at the sight of Him that in His lifetime rebuked the winds and the waves with a look. He was brought hither in the disguise of a wafer, and was assisted, I don't question, with several tuns of water. It would have been a very fair occasion to have signalized your holy tear at Vendome, if the very sight of a single drop could have quenched such a terrible fire. This is all the news I can write you from this place, where I have been hitherto taken up with the company of strangers that lodge in the same inn. I shall hope to

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see you within about a week hence, though I desire you not to hasten against your own inclinations ; for, as much as I esteem your company, I cannot desire it unless it be for your own convenience.

I am, dear sir,

Your very faithful humble servant,

Aux trois Rois à Chateaudun.

J. ADDISON.

TO AMBROSE PHILLIPS.

DUBLIN CASTLE, August, 1710.

DEAR SIR,

I AM very much obliged to you for sending me my letters from Mr. Vandewaters, but more for the copy of your Pastoral. I have read it over with abundance of pleasure, and like extremely well the alterations you have made in it. You have an admirable hand at a sheep-crook, though I must confess the conclusion of your poem would have pleased me better had it not been for that very reason that it was the conclusion of it. I hope you will follow the example of your Spencer and Virgil in making your Pastorals the prelude of something greater. He that can bewail Stella's death in so good a copy of verses, would be able to anatomize her after it in a better. I intend for England within a day or two, and should be very glad if I could be any way serviceable to you there.

Your faithful humble servant,

J. ADDISON.

ADDISON TO A LADY

TO A LADY (*His Patroness*).

MADAM,

IT would be ridiculous in me, after the late intimation you were pleased to favour me with, to affect any longer an ignorance of your sentiments, opposite soever as an approbation of them must be to the dictates of reason and justice. This expression, Madam, I am highly sensible, may appear a little too coarse in the mouth of a polite man ; but I hope is no disgrace to the behaviour of a sincere one. When we are to talk upon matters of importance, delicacy must give way to truth, and ceremony be sacrificed to candour : an honest freedom is the privilege of ingenuity ; and the mind, which is above the practice of deceit, can never stoop to a willingness to flatter. Give me leave, Madam, to remark that the connection subsisting between your husband and myself, is of a nature too strong for me to think of injuring him in a point where the happiness of his life is so materially concerned. You cannot be insensible of his goodness, or my obligations ; and suffer me to observe, Madam, that were I capable of such an action, at the time that my behaviour might be rewarded by your passion, I must be despised by your reason ; and though I might be esteemed as a lover, I must be hated as a man.

Highly sensible, Madam, of the power of your beauty, I am determined to avoid an interview where my reputation may be for ever lost. You have passions, you say, Madam ; but give me leave to answer, that you have understanding also : you have a heart susceptible of the tenderest impressions, but a soul, if you would choose to wake it, above an

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

unwarranted indulgence of them ; and let me entreat you, for your own sake, that no giddy impulse of an ill-placed inclination may induce you to entertain a thought prejudicial to your honour and repugnant to your virtue.

I, Madam, am far from being insensible, I too have passions, and could my situation, a few years ago, [have] allowed me a possibility of succeeding, I should have legally solicited that happiness which you are now ready to bestow. I had the honour, Madam, of supping at Mr. D——'s, where I first saw you, and shall make no scruple in declaring, that I never saw a person so irresistibly beautiful, or a manner so excessively engaging, but the superiority of your circumstances prevented any declaration on my side ; and though I burned with a flame as strong as ever filled human breast, I laboured to suppress, or at least studied to conceal it.

Time and absence at length abated an unhoping passion, and your marriage with my patron and my friend effectually cured it. Do not now, I beseech you, Madam, rekindle that fire which I must never think to fan ; do not now, I beseech you, destroy a tranquillity I have just begun to taste, or blast your own honour, which has been hitherto spotless and unsullied. My best esteem is ever yours ; but should I promise more ? Consider, I conjure you, the fatal necessity I am under of removing myself from an intercourse so dangerous, and in any other commands dispose of

Your most humble and devoted,

J. A.

ADDISON TO POPE

TO POPE.

Oct. 26, 1713.

I WAS extremely glad to receive a letter from you, but more so upon reading the contents of it. The work you mention¹ will, I dare say, very sufficiently recommend itself when your name appears with the proposals: and if you think I can any way contribute to the forwarding them, you cannot lay a greater obligation upon me than by employing me in such an office. As I have an ambition in having it known that you are my friend, I shall be very proud of showing it by this or any other instance. I question not but your translation will enrich our tongue and do honour to our country; for I conclude of it already from those performances with which you have obliged the public. I would only have you consider how it may most turn to your advantage. Excuse my impertinence in this particular, which proceeds from my zeal for your ease and happiness. The work would cost you a great deal of time, and unless you undertake it, will, I am afraid, never be executed by any other; at least I know none of this age that is equal to it besides yourself.

I am at present wholly immersed in country business, and begin to take a delight in it. I wish I might hope to see you here some time, and will not despair of it, when you engage in a work that will require solitude and retirement.

I am, sir,

Your very humble and very obedient servant,

J. ADDISON.

¹ His translation of the Iliad.

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Nov. 2, 1713.

I HAVE received your letter, and am glad to find that you have laid so good a scheme for your great undertaking. I question not but the prose¹ will require as much care as the poetry, but the variety will give yourself some relief, and more pleasure to your readers.

You gave me leave once to take the liberty of a friend in advising you not to content yourself with one half of the nation for your admirers when you might command them all. If I might take the freedom to repeat it, I would on this occasion. I think you are very happy that you are out of the fray, and I hope all your undertakings will turn to the better account for it.

You see how I presume on your friendship in taking all this freedom with you: but I already fancy that we have lived many years together in an unreserved conversation, and that we may do so many more is the sincere wish of

Your, &c.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JAMES CRAGGS, ESQ.²

June 4, 1719.

DEAR SIR,

I CANNOT wish that any of my writings should last longer than the memory of our friendship, and therefore I thus publicly bequeath them to you, in return for the many valuable instances of your affection.

¹ Meaning the notes to his translation of Homer.

² Originally prefixed to his Dialogue on Medals, first published after his death in 1719. Probably the last letter which Addison wrote.

ADDISON TO CRAGGS

That they may come to you with as little disadvantage as possible, I have left the care of them to one whom, by the experience of some years, I know well qualified to answer my intentions. He has already the honour and happiness of being under your protection, and, as he will very much stand in need of it, I cannot wish him better than that he may continue to deserve the favour and countenance of such a patron.

I have no time to lay out in forming such compliments as would but ill suit that familiarity between us which was once my greatest pleasure and will be my greatest honour hereafter. Instead of them, accept of my hearty wishes, that the great reputation you have acquired so early may increase more and more, and that you may long serve your country with those excellent talents, and unblemished integrity, which have so powerfully recommended you to the most gracious and amiable monarch that ever filled a throne. May the frankness and generosity of your spirit continue to soften and subdue your enemies, and gain you many friends, if possible as sincere as yourself. When you have found such, they cannot wish you more true happiness than I, who am, with the greatest zeal,

Dear sir, your most affectionate friend,

And faithful, obedient servant,

J. ADDISON.

LETTERS FROM STEELE.

TO MARY SCURLOCK.

1707.

MADAM,

YOUR wit and beauty are suggestions which may easily lead you into the intention of my writing to you. You may be sure that I cannot be cold to so many good qualities as all that see you must observe in you. You are a woman of a very good understanding, and will not measure thoughts by any ardour in my expressions, which is the ordinary language on these occasions.

I have reasons for hiding from my nearest relation any purpose I may have resolved upon of waiting on you if you permit it, and I hope you have confidence from mine as well as your own character that such a condescension should not be ill used by, Madam,

Your most obedient servant,

R. STEELE.

1707.

MADAM,

I WRIT to you on Saturday by Mrs. Warren, and give you this trouble to urge the same request I made then, which was that I may be admitted to wait upon you. I should be very far from desiring

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

this if it were a transgression of the most severe rules to allow it; I know you are very much above the little arts which are frequent in your sex of giving unnecessary torment to their admirers; therefore hope you'll do so much justice to the generous passion I have for you, as to let me have an opportunity of acquainting you upon what motives I pretend to your good opinion. I shall not trouble you with my sentiments till I know how they will be receiv'd, and as I know no reason why difference of sex should make our language to each other differ from the ordinary rules of right reason, I shall affect plainnesse and sincerity in my discourse to you, as much as other lovers do perplexity and rapture. Instead of saying, I shall die for you, I professe I should be glad to lead my life with you; you are as beautiful, as witty, as prudent, and as good humour'd as any woman breathing, but I must confesse to you I regard all those excellencies as you will please to direct 'em for my happinesse or misery. With me, madam, the only lasting motive to love is the hope of it's becoming mutuall; I begg of you to let Mrs. Warren send me word when I may attend you. I promise you I'll talk of nothing but indifferent things, tho' at the same time I know not how I shall approach you in the tender moment of first seeing you after this declaration which has been made by, Madam,

Your most obedient &

Most faithfull humble servant,

RICHARD STEELE.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

1707.

MADAM,

I CAME to your house this night to wait on you, but you have commanded me to expect the happiness of seeing you at another time of more leisure. I am now under your own roof while I write, and that imaginary satisfaction of being so near you tho' not in your presence has in it something that touches me with so tender ideas that it is impossible for me to describe their force. All great passion makes us dumb, and the highest happiness as well as highest grief seizes us too violently to be express'd by our words.

You are so good as to let me know I shall have the honour of seeing you when I next come here. I will live upon that expectation, and meditate on your perfections till that happy hour. The vainest woman upon earth never saw in her glasse half the attractions which I view in you, your air, your shape, your every glance, motion and gesture have such peculiar graces that you possesse my whole soul, and I know no life but in the hopes of your approbation ; I know not what to say but that I love you with the sincerest passion that ever enter'd the heart of man. I will make it the business of my life to find out means of convincing you that I prefer you to all that's pleasing upon earth.

I am, Madam,

Your most obedient, most faithful humble servant,

RICHARD STEELE.

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

Aug. 16, 1702.

MADAM,

BEFORE the light this morning dawn'd upon the earth I awak'd and lay in expectation of its return, not that it could give any new sense of joy to me, but as I hop'd it would blesse you with it's chearfull face, after a quiet which I wish'd you last night. If my prayers are heard the day appear'd with all the influence of a merciful Creator upon your person and actions. Let others, my lovely charmer, talk of a blind being that disposes their hearts, I condemn their low images of love. I have not a thought which relates to you that I cannot with confidence beseech the all-seeing power to bless me in. May He direct you in all your steps, and reward your innocence, your sanctity of manners, your prudent youth, and becoming piety, with the continuance of His grace and protection. This is an unusuall language to ladies, but you have a mind elevated above the giddy motions of a sex insnar'd by flattery, and misled by a false and short adoration into a solid and long contempt. Beauty, my fairest creature, palls in the possession, but I love also your mind ; your soul is as dear to me as my own, and if the advantages of a liberall education, some knowledge and as much contempt of the world join'd with the endeavours towards a life of strict vertue and religion, can qualifie me to raise new ideas in a breast so well dispos'd as yours is, our days will passe away with joy, and old age instead of introducing melancholy prospects of decay, give us hope of eternal youth in a better life. I have but a few minutes from the duty of my employment to write in, and without time to

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

read over what I have writ, therefore beseech you to pardon the first hints of my mind which I have express'd in so little order.

I am, dearest creature,

Your most obedient, most devoted servant,

RICHARD STEELE.

1707.

MADAM,

I COULD not omit writing to you tho' on Sunday morning when I know I interrupt your meditation on higher subjects; there is nothing but heav'n it self, which I prefer to your love, which shall be the pursuit of my life, and I hope there will not a day appear to our lives end wherein there will not appear some instance of an affection not to be excell'd but in the mansions of eternity to which we may recommend our selves by our behaviour to each other here.

I am, my lovely charmer, your obedient————

LORD SUNDERLAND'S OFFICE,

1707.

MADAM,

WITH what language shall I addresse my lovely fair to acquaint her with the sentiments of an heart she delights to torture? I have not a minute's quiet out of your sight; and, when I'me with you, you use me with so much distance, that I am still in a state of absence heightned with a view of the charms which I am deny'd to approach. In a word you

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

must give me either a fan, a mask or a glove you have wore or I cannot live, otherwise you must expect I'll kiss your hand, or when I next sit by you steal your handkerchief. You your self are too great a bounty to be receiv'd at once, therefore I must be prepar'd by degrees least the mighty gift distract me with joy. Dear Mrs. Scurlock, I'me tir'd with calling you by that name, therefore say the day in which you'll take that of, madam, your most obedient most devoted humble servant,

RICHARD STEELE.

SMITH STREET, WESTMINSTER,

1707.

MADAM,

I LAY down last night with your image in my thoughts, and have awak'd this morning in the same contemplation. The pleasing transport with which I'me delighted, has a sweetness in it attended with a train of ten thousand soft desires, anxieties, and cares; the day arises on my hopes with new brightness; youth, beauty and innocence are the charming objects that steal me from myself, and give me joys above the reach of ambition, pride or glory. Beleive me, fair one, to throw my self at your feet is giving my self the highest blisse I know on earth. Oh hasten ye minutes! bring on the happy morning wherein to be ever her's will make me look down on thrones! Dear Molly, I am tenderly, passionately, faithfully thine,

RICHARD STEELE.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

Aug. 29, 1707.

MADAM,

I FEAR it will be an hour later than usual that I wait upon you to-night, for I have an appointment which will detain me, and which concerns both you and, madam, your most oblig'd most obedient humble servant,

RICHARD STEELE.

Aug. 30, 1707.

MADAM,

I BEGG pardon that my paper is not finer, but I am forc'd to write from a coffee-house where I am attending about businesse. There is a dirty croud of busie faces all around me talking of *money*; while all my ambition, all my wealth is love! Love, which animates my heart, sweetens my humour, enlarges my soul, and affects every action of my life. 'Tis to my lovely charmer I owe that many noble ideas are continually affix'd to my words and actions; 'tis the naturall effect of that generous passion to create in the admirer some similitude of the object admir'd. Thus my dear am I every day to improve from so sweet a companion. Look up, my fair one, to that heav'n which made thee such; and join with me to implore its influence on our tender innocent hours, and beseech the Author of Love to blesse the rights he has ordain'd, and mingle with our happinesse a just sense of our transient condition and a resignation to His will which only can regulate our minds to a steady endeavour to please Him and each other. I am for ever

Your faithful servant,

RICHARD STEELE.

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

Saturday night [Aug. 30, 1707].

DEAR, LOVELY MRS. SCURLOCK,

I HAVE been in very good company, where your health, under the character of the woman I lov'd best, has been often drank, so that I may say I am dead drunk for your sake, which is more than I die for you. Yours,

R. STEELE.

ST. JAMES'S COFFEE-HOUSE, Sept. 1, 1707.

MADAM,

It is the hardest thing in the world to be in love and yet attend to business. As for me, all who speake to me find me out, and I must lock myself up, or other people will do it for me.

A gentleman ask'd me this morning what news from Lisbon, and I answer'd she's exquisitely handsome. Another desir'd to know when I had been last at Hampton Court, I reply'd 'twill be on Tuesday come se'nnight. Prithee allow me at least to kisse your hand before that day, that my mind may be in some composure. O love!

A thousand torments dwell about thee,
Yet who would live to live without thee?

Methinks I could write a volume to you, but all the language on earth would fail in saying how much, and with what disinterested passion, I am ever yours,

RICHD. STEELE.

Sept. 2, 1707, Between one and two.

DEAR CREATURE,

EVER since sev'n this morning I have been in company, but have stole a moment to pour out the full-

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

nesse of my thoughts, and complain to you of the interruption that impertinent amusement call'd businesse has giv'n me amidst my contemplation on the best of women, and the most agreeable object that ever charm'd the heart of man. I am, dearest, loveliest creature,

Eternally thine,

R. STEELE.

Sept. 3, 1707, Seven in the morn.

DEAR CREATURE,

NEXT to the influence of heav'n I am to thank you that I see the returning day with pleasure. To passe my evenings in so sweet a conversation, and have the esteem of a woman of your merit, has in it a particularity of happinesse no more to be express'd than return'd. But I am, my lovely creature, contented to be on the oblig'd side, and to employ all my days in new endeavours to convince you, and all the world of the sense I have of your condescension in chusing,

Madam,

Your most faithfull, most obedient humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

Sept. 4, 1707.

DEAR MISSE MOLLY,

I AM loath to interrupt your prayers or my indispensable businesse with a long epistle this morning, therefore forgive me that I only just say

I am ever yours,

R. S.

I shall come at night and make all the dispatch here I can not to be wanted.

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

Sept. 5, 1707.

DEAR MADAM,

THE pleasing hope with which my mind is possess'd is too delicate a touch of soul to be explain'd, but it is founded on so solid and lasting motives that I am sure it will actuate the behaviour of my whole life; for I do not entertain my imagination with those transports only which are raised by beauty, but fix it also on the satisfactions which flow from the reverence due to virtue. Thus I am not only allur'd by your person, but convinc'd by your life that you are the most amiable of women. Let us go on, my lovely creature, to make our regards to each other mutuall and unchangeable, that while the world around us is enchanted with the false satisfactions of vagrant desires, our persons may be shrines to each other, and sacred to conjugall faith, unreserv'd confidence, and heavenly society. While we live after this manner angels will be so far from being our superiours that they will be our attendants. Every good being guard my fairest, and conduct her to that bosome that pants to receive her, and protect her from all the cares and vicissitudes of life with an eternall tendernesse.

I am ever most obligedly yours,

RICHD. STEELE.

Saturday, Sept. 6, 1707.

MADAM,

I AM at a freind's house where they have giv'n me, as you see, but very ordinary instruments to write with, however I hope the sincerity of my heart is not to be measur'd by the dresse in which I cloath it.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

My thoughts hurry upon me in consideration of the approach of the moment in which those fair lips are to give me in one monosyllable more than all the eloquence in the world can expresse, when you say yes to the accepting of,

Madam,

Your most oblig'd most gratefull

Most obedient servant,

RICHARD STEELE.

[Steele and Mary Scurlock were married Sep. 9, 1707.]

Monday morning, Oct. 13, 1707.

DEAR MADAM,

THIS comes to begg your pardon for every act of rebellion I have ever committed against you, and to subscribe my self in an error for being impatient of your kind concern in interesting your self with so much affection [in] all which relates to me. I do not question but your prudence will be a lasting honour and advantage to me in all the occurrences of my life; the cheif happinesse in it is that I have the honour of being

Your most oblig'd husband & most humble servant,

RICHD. STEELE.

LORD SUNDERLAND'S OFFICE,

May 24, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

I BEG the favour of you to put my nightgown, slippers, a clean shirt, and cravat, into the coach-box,

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

and make my apology to my mother for staying out to-night. We shall be back to-morrow evening. To-morrow shall be spent in free conference between you and me at Mr. Bradshaw's. Give strict orders to Mrs. Watts about her care and attendance on my mother. I am taking pains in removing into my new office.

I am your most obedient husband,

R. STEELE.

I love the country most mightily, indeed I do ; so you say, so I think.

Who are you ?

I am true. I am.

June 5, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

WHAT you would have me do I know not. All that my fortune will compass you shall always enjoy, and have no body near you that you do not like except I am my self disapproved by you for being devotedly your obedient husband,

RICHD. STEELE.

I shan't come home till night.

June 7, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

I ENCLOSE to you a guinea for your pockett. I dine with Lord Hallifax.

I wish I knew how to court you into good humour, for two or three quarrells more will dispatch me quite. If you have any love for me beleive I am always pursuing our mutuall good. Pray consider that all my

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

little fortune is to [be] settled this month and that I have inadvertently made my self liable to impatient people who take all advantages. If you have [not] patience I shall transact my businesse rashly and lose a very great sum to quicken the time of your being ridd of all people you don't like.

Yours ever,

RICHD. STEELE.

Aug. 11, 1708.

DEAR WIFE,

I HAVE order'd Richard to take your directions, whether you will have the chariot with two or four horses to sett you and your freind down at your house at Hampton Court. Watts is gone over the water and says she has your commands to follow in the stage-coach. I shall make it the businesse of my life to make you easy and happy: consult your cool thoughts and you'll know that 'tis the glory of a woman to be her husband's freind and companion and not his sovereign director.

I am with truth, sincerity and tenderness ever your faithfull husband,

R. STEELE.

Pray let the gardner put the place in order.

Aug. 12, 1708.

MADAM,

I HAVE your letter wherein you let me know that the little dispute we have had is far from being a trouble to you, nevertheless I assure you any disturbance between us is the greatest affliction to me

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

imaginable. You talk of the judgement of the world. I shall never govern my actions by it, but by the rules of morality and right reason. I love you better than the light of my eyes or the life-blood in my heart, but when I have lett you know that, you are also to understand that neither my sight shall be so far enchanted or my affection so much master of me as to make me forgett our common interest. To attend my businesse as I ought, and improve my fortune, it is necessary that my time and my will should be under no direction but my own. Pray give my most humble service to Mrs. Binns. I write all this rather to explain my own thoughts to you than answer your letter distinctly. I inclose it to you that upon second thoughts you may see the disrespectfull manner in which you treat

Your affectionate faithful husband,

R. STEELE.

Aug. 13, 1708.

MADAM,

I HOPE this will find you in good health as I am at this present writing, thanks be to God for it.

I have not only rebell'd against you but all the rest of my governours from your self whome I acknowledge to have the right of partnership to the lowest person who had to do with me. I have a very just sense of your merit and think, when I have putt you into the proper methods which you ought to follow, I shall be the happiest man living in being

Your most affectionate husband & humble servant,

RICHD. STEELE.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

Aug. 13, 1708, Four in the afternoon.

DEAR PRUE,

I SEND you some tea which I doubt not but you will find is very good. I am

Your very affectionate husband & most humble servant,

RICHD. STEELE.

This is my second letter to-day.

Aug. 28, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

THE afternoon coach shall bring you ten pounds. Your letter shows you are passionately in love with me. But we must take our portion of life as it runs without repining, and I consider that good nature added to that beautifull form God has giv'n you would make an happinesse too great for humane life.

Your most oblig'd husband & most humble servant,

RICHD. STEELE.

Sept. 19, 1708, Five in the evening.

DEAR PRUE,

I send you seven-pen'orth of wall nutts at five a penny, which is the greatest proof I can give you at present of my being with my whole heart

Yours,

RICHD. STEELE.

The little horse comes back with the boy who returns with him for me on Wednesday evening. In the mean time I beleive it will be well that he run in the Park.

I'me Mrs. Binns's servant.

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

Since I writ this I came to the place where the boy was order'd with the horses, and not finding him sent this bearer lest you should be in fears the boy not returning.

There are but 29 walnutts.

Sept. 20, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

IF a servant I sent last night got to Hampton-Court, you received 29 walnuts and a letter from me. I enclose the Gazette ; and am, with all my soul,

Your passionate lover, and faithful husband,

RICH. STEELE.

Since I writ the above I have found half a hundred more of walnuts, which I send herewith.

My service to Binns.

GARTER TAVERN, Nov. 16, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

I AM sorry I cannot come to sitt an hour with you to-night, being detain'd by businesse with Mr. Huggins which you know off. I have to-day been with Mr. Tryon, who does not now deny his having effects, but pretends to complain of hard usage in suing him. Within a day or two I doubt not but we shall have our money ; which will be the introduction into that life we both pant after with so much earnestnesse.

Your oblig'd husband,

RICHD. STEELE.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

Nov. 17, 1708.

DEAR WIFE,

HOW can you add to my cares by making so unjust complaints against me as in yours of last night. I take all the pains imaginable to bring you home to ease and satisfaction, and made a great step in it yester-night, which I could not had I spent my time elsewhere than where I did. My dear, be chearfull, and expect a good account of things this evening from, dear wife,

Your most affectionate & most oblig'd husband,

RICHD. STEELE.

Nov. 28, 1708.

DEAR WIFE,

TAKE confidence in that Being who has promis'd protection to all the good and virtuous when afflicted. Mr. Glover accommodates me with the money which is to clear this present sorrow this evening. I will come to Mrs. Bynns's exactly at eight.

I am your most affectionate husband &

Obedient servant,

RICHD. STEELE.

March 11, 1708-9.

DEAR PRUE,

I enclose five guineas, but can't come home to dinner. Dear little woman, take care of thy self, and eat and drink chearfully.

RICHD. STEELE.

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

Dec. 23.

MY DEAR,

I SHALL not come home to dinner, but have fixed every thing; and received money for present uses. I desire, my dear, that you have nothing else to do but to be a darling; the way to which is to be always in good humour, and beleive I spend none of my time but to the advantage of you and

Your most obedient husband,

RICHARD STEELE.

Feb. 15, 1709-10.

DEAR WIFE,

I BELEIVE I am the first that ever rejoiced at the flight of one he loved. After I was done writing I went up to visit my sick wife, and found she was her self gone a visiting. I wish you had given me the pleasure of knowing you were so well, it would have giv'n what I was writing a more lively turn.

I am your affectionate, tender, observant & indulgent husband,

RICHARD STEELE.

BERRY-STREET, Half hour after six,
Wednesday, Aug. 9, 1710.

DEAR PRUE,

THOU art such a foolish tender thing that there is no living with thee.

I have broke my rest last night because I knew you would be such a fool as not to sleep. Pray come home by this morning's coach, if you are impatient :

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

but if you are not here before noon I will come down to you in the evening, but I must make visits this morning to hear what is doing.

Yours ever,

RICHARD STEELE.

COCKPITT, Aug. 9, 1710.

DEAR PRUE,

I CANNOT possibly come, expecting orders here which I must overlook, and having not half done my other businesse at the Savoy.

Dear creature, come in the morning coach and if I can I will return with you in the evening. Pray wrap yourself very warm.

Yours ever,

RICHARD STEELE.

Sept. 30, 1710.

DEAR PRUE,

I AM very sleepy and tired, but could not think of closing my eyes till I had told you I am, dearest creature,

Your most affectionate and faithful husband,

RICHARD STEELE.

From the Press,¹ One in the morning.

June 20, 1711.

DEAR MADAM,

I HEARTILY beg your pardon for my omission to write yesterday. It was no failure of my tender regard for you, but, having been very much perplexed in my

¹ The Gazette printing office.

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

thoughts on the subject of my last, made me determine to suspend speaking of it until I came myself. But, my lovely creature, know it is not in the power of age, or misfortune, or any other accident which hangs over human life, to take from me the pleasing esteem I have for you, or the memory of the bright figure you appeared in, when you gave your hand and heart, to, madam,

Your most grateful husband
and obedient servant,
RICHARD STEELE.

July 15, 1712.

DEAR PRUE,

I THANK you for your kind billet. The nurse shall have money this week. I saw your son Dick, but he is a peevish chit. You cannot conceive how pleased I am that I shall have the prettiest house to receive the prettiest woman who is the darling of

RICHARD STEELE.

July 24, 1712.

DEAR CREATURE,

ALL you desire shall be done. I begg of you to compose your self for nothing else can [make] happy one that doats on you so much that he cannot hide it tho' he heartily wishes he could.

Yours unchangeably,
RICHARD STEELE.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

HAMPTON COURT,
Thursday Noon, Sep. 17, 1712.

DEAREST WIFE,

THE finest women in nature should not detain me an hour from you, but you must sometimes suffer the rivalry of the wisest men. Lord Hallifax and Sommers leave this place after dinner and I go to Watford to speak with the Sollicitor Generall, and from thence come directly to Bloomsbury-Square.

Yours faithfully,

RICHARD STEELE.

DEAR WIFE,

IT is an unspeakable trouble to me that I ever let fall a passionate word in return for any impatience you show about the provision I make for you. I am indeed. I take all the pains imaginable and love you better than toungue can expresse.

Yours faithfully,

RICHARD STEELE.

Nov. 18, 1712.

DEAR PRUE,

I AM come from a committee where I have [been] charman, and drank too much. I have the head ach and should be glad you would come to me in good humour, which would always banish any uneasinesse of temper from, dear Prue,

Your fond fool of a husband,

RICHARD STEELE.

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

March 28, 1713.

DEAR PRUE,

I WILL do every thing you desire your own way.

Yours ever,

RICHARD STEELE.

DEAR PRUE,

I INCLOSE to you your letter and think it needless to make any other answer than what is a very true one to your own knowledge. I never deny'd you any thing in my power to give or do. When I had not money I have given promises to keep up your spirits and keep you in good humour. I do not pretend to reply to the severe things you say to me, because I never did nor ever will mean any thing but pleasing you, therefore, I hope you will continue to love

Your affectionate and obedient husband,

RICHARD STEELE.

DEAR PRUE,

IF you and Mrs. Edwards can make use of these tickets which were given me I shall be glad, if not send them back, and I will give them to other people, for I will not go my self to any publick diversion except you are of the assembly.

Yours ever,

RICHARD STEELE.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

BLOOMESBURY-SQUARE, Dec. 24, 1713.

DEAR PRUE,

I DINE with Lord Hallifax and shall be at home half hour after six.

For thee I dye, for thee I languish.

RICHARD STEELE.

July 21, 1714.

MADAM,¹

IF great obligations received are just motives for addresses of this kind, you have an unquestionable pretension to my acknowledgments, who have condescended to give me your very self. I can make no return for so inestimable a favour, but in acknowledging the generosity of the giver. To have either wealth, wit, or beauty, is generally a temptation to a woman to put an unreasonable value upon herself; but with all these, in a degree which drew upon you the addresses of men of the amplest fortunes, you bestowed your person where you could have no expectations but from the gratitude of the receiver, though you knew he could exert that gratitude in no other returns but esteem and love. For which must I first thank you? for what you have denied yourself, or for what you have bestowed on me?

I owe to you, that for my sake you have overlooked the prospect of living in pomp and plenty, and I have not been circumspect enough to preserve you from care and sorrow. I will not dwell upon this particular; you are so good a wife, that I know

¹ Dedication to his wife, of Vol. III. of The Ladies' Library.

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

you think I rob you of more than I can give, when I say anything in your favour to my own disadvantage.

Whoever should see or hear you, would think it were worth leaving all the world for you ; while I, habitually possessed of that happiness, have been throwing away impotent endeavours for the rest of mankind, to the neglect of her for whom any other man, in his senses, would be apt to sacrifice everything else.

I know not by what unreasonable prepossession it is, but methinks there must be something austere to give authority to wisdom ; and I cannot account for having only rallied many seasonable sentiments of yours, but that you are too beautiful to appear judicious.

One may grow fond, but not wise, from what is said by so lovely a counsellor. Hard fate, that you have been lessened by your perfections, and lost power by your charms !

That ingenuous spirit in all your behaviour, that familiar grace in your words and actions, has for this seven years only inspired admiration and love ; but experience has taught me, the best counsel I ever have received has been pronounced by the fairest and softest lips ; and convinced me that I am in you blest with a wise friend, as well as a charming mistress.

Your mind shall no longer suffer by your person ; nor shall your eyes, for the future, dazzle me into a blindness towards your understanding. I rejoice in this public occasion to shew my esteem for you ; and must do you the justice to say, that there can be no virtue represented in all this collection for the female world, which I have not known you exert, as far as the opportunities of your fortune have given you

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

leave. Forgive me, that my heart overflows with love and gratitude for daily instances of your prudent œconomy, the just disposition you make of your little affairs, your cheerfulness in dispatch of them, your prudent forbearance of any reflections that they might have needed less vigilance had you disposed of your fortune suitably ; in short, for all the arguments you every day give me of a generous and sincere affection.

It is impossible for me to look back on many evils and pains which I have suffered since we came together, without a pleasure which is not to be expressed, from the proofs I have had, in those circumstances, of your unwearied goodness. How often has your tenderness removed pain from my sick head ! How often anguish from my afflicted heart ! With how skilful patience have I known you comply with the vain projects which pain has suggested, to have an aching limb removed by journeying from one side of a room to another ! How often, the next instant, travelled the same ground again, without telling your patient it was to no purpose to change his situation ? If there are such beings as guardian angels, thus are they employed. I will no more believe one of them more good in its inclinations, than I can conceive it more charming in its form, than my wife.

But I offend ; and forget that what I say to you is to appear in public. You are so great a lover of home, that I know it will be irksome to you to go into the world even in an applause. I will end this without so much as mentioning your little flock, or your own amiable figure at the head of it. That I think them preferable to all other children, I know,

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

is the effect of passion and instinct. That I believe you the best of wives, I know, proceeds from experience and reason.

I am, Madam,
Your most obliged husband
and most obedient humble servant,
RICHARD STEELE.

BORROW-BRIDGE, Twelve at night,
Jan. 28, 1714-15.

DEAR PRUE,

I OBEY your directions exactly and avoid drinking, and everything else that might give you any trouble. The precept for electing members for this place came hither to-day, and the election is to be on Wednesday. It looks with a good face on my side. I take the opportunity of writing by the gentleman who keeps the Black Swan. He has very much pleased me with an account that you had a river at the end of your garden. There will be there, I doubt not, a thousand prayers offered up, to grant me discretion, and the ease of this world. You and yours, I fear, will make me covetous, I am sure you have made me value wealth much more than I ever thought I should, but indeed I have a reason which makes it worth the pursuit, it will make me more agreeable to you.

I am indeed, Prue, intirely yours,
RICHARD STEELE.

I hope Nanny does not misbehave so as to disturb your tranquillity.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

If the post should this night not bring me money,
I find I can have money in the countrey and draw a
bill on Mr. Castleman¹ at London.

SPEAKER'S CHAMBERS, Aug. 14, 1715.

DEAR PRUE,

I WRITE this before I go to Lord Marleborough's to
let you know that there was no one at the treasury
but Kelsey, with whome Welsted left the order, and
he is to be at the treasury again to-morrow between
two and three when, without doubt, the money will
be payd. I have no hopes from that or anything
else ; but by dint of riches to get the government of
your ladyship.

Yours,

RICHARD STEELE.

DEAREST PRUE,

THIS is only to ask how you do.

I am

Your-Betty-Dick-Eugene Molly's

Humble servant,

RICHARD STEELE.

[With a case.]

ST. JAMES'S STREET, Aug. 9, 1716.

DEAR PRUE,

YOU may observe, in those excellent books which
your polite cousin reads to you, that necessaries are
often wanting to the heroes and heroines for want of
stowing their portmanteaus with proper materials.

¹ The treasurer at Drury Lane Theatre.

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

The bearer brings you, with this, a case of instruments for eating and drinking, that may be upon the road both of ornament and use to,

Madam,

Your obedient husband,

RICHARD STEELE.

Dec. 13, 1716.

MY DEAR PRUE,

MRS. SECRETARY BEVANS has acquainted me by the 7th instant that you are well, and very much my freind and servant. Mrs. Evans went to see Betty yesterday who, she says, is grown a very fine lady. Moll sate by me a little as I was writing yesterday, she will not be at all marked, but is a dear child. Eugene is grown a very lively gentleman. After all this news, which takes in all the compasse of whatever you care for, you will not much regard politicks if I should write any. But it seems, my Lord Townshend is out, and Stanhope and Methuen the two secretaries for England, and Duke Roxborough made a third secretary for Scotland, for which place I intend to sett out this day with an opportunity of a gentleman's coach going down.

I am, dear Prue, your most affectionate

Obedient languishing relict,

RICHARD STEELE.

The machine is almost ready.

Christmas-Day.

DEAR PRUE,

I WENT the other day to see Betty at Chelsea, who

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

represented to me in her pretty language that she seemed helpless, and freindlesse without any bodye's taking notice of her at Christmas, when all the children but she and two more were with their relations. I have invited her to dinner to-day, with one of the teachers, and they are here now in the room Betty and Moll very noisy and pleased together. Besse goes back again as soon as she has dined to Chelsea. I have stay'd in to get a very advantageous affair dispatched, for I assure you I love money at present as well as your ladyship and am intirely yours,

RICHARD STEELE.

I told Betty I had writ to you and she made me open my letter again and give her humble duty to her mother, and desire to know when she shall have the honour to see her in town. She gives her love to Mrs. Bevans and all her cousins.

ST. JAMES'S STREET, Jan. 1, 1716-17.

DEAR DEAR PRUE,

I WISH you from my soul an happy new year, and many very different from what we have hitherto had. In order thereunto I have taken a resolution, which, by the blessing of God, I will stedfastly keep, to make my children partners with me in all my future gain, in the manner I have before described to you. That you may be convinced of this happy change, you shall be your self the keeper of what I lay up for them by quarterly portions from this day. I am, with the tenderest affection,

Your faithful husband and most humble servant,

RICHARD STEELE.

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

Feb. 25, 1716-17.

DEAR PRUE,

THIS goes to dear Prue to comfort her in her absence from her husband. If she thinks the distance as painfull as he does hearing from him must be a great satisfaction. I am sure as soon as I have made my affairs so easy as that we can be together without being interrupted with worldly care, I shall put an end to the distance between us. I, every day, do something towards this and next week shall pay off Madam Dawson. You shall have within a few days a state of my circumstances, the prospect of bettering them, and the progresse I have already made in this necessary work. The children do come on so well that it would make ev'n me covetous to put them in a condition equal to the good genius, I blesse God, they seem to be of. Moll is the noisiest little creature in the world, and as active as a boy. Madam Betty is the gravest of matrons in her airs and civilities. Eugene a most beautifull and lusty child.

The Parliament goes on but coldly, but I hope there is a warmer spirit will soon appear in the service of this nation, which possessed of the most solid blessings, sacrifices itself to trifles.

Yours ever,

RICHARD STEELE

HAMPTON COURT,

March 16, 1716-17.

DEAR PRUE,

IF you have written any thing to me which I should have received last night I begg your pardon

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

that I cannot answer till next post. The House of Commons will be very busie the next week and I had many things publick and private for which I wanted four and twenty hours retirement and therefore came to visit your son. I came out of town yesterday being Friday and shall return to-morrow. Your son at the present writing is mighty well employed in tumbling on the floor of the room, and sweeping the sand with a feather. He grows a most delightfull child, and very full of play and spiritt. He is also a very great scholar. He can read his primer, and I have brought down my Virgil. He makes most shrewd remarks upon the pictures. We are very intimate friends and play fellows. He begins to be very ragged and I hope I shall be pardoned if I equip him with new cloaths and frocks or what Mrs. Evans and I shall think for his service.

I am, dear Prue, ever yours,

RICHARD STEELE.

March 26, 1717.

MY DEAREST PRUE,

I HAVE received yours, wherein you give me the sensible affliction of letting me know of the continuall pain in your head. I could not meet with necessary advice, but according to the description you give me I am confident washing your head in cold water will cure you ; I mean having water pour'd on your head, and rubbed with an hand, from the crown of your head to the nape of your neck. When I lay in your place, and on your pillow I assure [you] I fell into tears last night to think that my charming little

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

insolent might be then awake and in pain, and took it to be a sin to go to sleep.

For this tender passion towards you I must be contented that your Prueship will condescend to call your self my well wisher. I am going abroad and write before I go out lest accidents should happen to prevent my writing at all. If I can meet with farther advice for you I will send it in a letter to Alexander.

I am, dear Prue, ever thine,

RICHARD STEELE.

DEAR PRUE,

I HAD a letter from Mr. Scurlock coolly saying you ordered him to let me know you were indisposed, and could not write.

I expect more fondnesse, & that you say, at least, some kind thing to me under your own hand every post. The Lords of the Treasury when they went out of their post ordered half a years sallary to our commission, and when that comes out of the managers hands from the estates forfeited we shall be paid; and that I believe will be about a fortnight hence. In the mean time I want it sorely to pay off many things and keep something by me, if ever I can bring my self to that economy.

You have the kindest of husbands,

RICHARD STEELE.

I am very lame but in good health otherwise.

DEAR PRUE,

YOU never date your letters which very much perplexes me. To avoid the same fault I tell you that I have just received yours on Wednesday evening May

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

the 1st and sit down to answer now I am alone and at leisure. I am heartily concerned for your eyes ; I have often told you I believe you have used enchantments to enslave me, for an expression in yours of *Good Dick* has put me in so much rapture that I could forget my present most miserable lameness and walk down to you. I have at this time interest enough to do what you ask for Sandy ; but I do not ask Mr. Secretary Addison anything. Gillmore dined with me to-day, when Benson was expected but did not come to our great uneasiness, for we were to have taken measures to bring the matter into Parliament, and concerted every thing else relating to the machine, which is a most prodigious work.

My Lord Cadogan who is now in the first degree of favour sat with me here the other night above an hour. I should by his great frankness and generosity of mind be rightly recommended and represented, but my decrepid condition spoils all. The money is not yet come to hand which makes me very uneasy and out of patience. I think the affair which Sandy asks for is to be surveyor of glasse windows for Carmarthen and an adjacent county. I had not interest in the Treasury till this new commission was constituted, but think there is not one in it that would not be ready to do me a little favour.

My dear little peevish beautiful wise governess God bless you.

RICHARD STEELE.

I do not write news to you because I have ordered the letter from the Secretary's office to be sent to you constantly.

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

May 22, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

YOUR son is now with me very merry in rags, which condition I am going to better ; for he shall have new things immediately. He is extremely pretty and has his face sweetned with something of the Venus his mother, which is no small delight to the Vulcan who begott him.

Ever yours,

RICHARD STEELE.

June 15, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

I AM heartily glad my letter which you received on Whitsuntide was so agreeable to you. It is indeed, in our power, to make each other as happy as mortals are capable of being. I have in pursuance of the resolution I told you of parted with my new man, and have now only Wilmot. If you think Sam would recover here it is well to send him, but I cannot tell when I can leave the town, because the tryall of my Lord Oxford will prolong the session. The managers for that purpose were named yesterday. I have been a little intemperate, and discomposed with it, but I will be very sober for the future, especially for the sake of the most amiable and most deserving woman who has made me her

Happy slave and obedient husband,

RICHARD STEELE.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

June 20, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

I HAVE yours of the 14th and am infinitely obliged to you for the length of it. I do not know another whome I could commend for that circumstance, but where we intirely love the continuance of any thing they do to please us is a pleasure. As for your relations ; once for all pray take it for granted that my regard and conduct towards all and singular of them shall be as you direct.

I hope by the grace of God to continue what you wish me, every way, an honest man. My wife and my children are the objects that have wholly taken up my heart, and as I am not invited, or encouraged in any thing which regards the publick, I am easy under that neglect, or envy of my past actions, and cheerfully contract that diffusive spirit within the interests of my own family. You are the head of us and I stoop to a female reign as being naturally made the slave of beauty. But to prepare for our manner of living when we are again together, give me leave to say, while I am here at leisure and come to lye at Chelsea, what I think may contribute to our better way of living. I very much approve Mrs. Evans and her husband, and if you would take my advice I would have them have a being in our house, and Mrs. Clark the care and inspection of the nursery. I would have you intirely at leisure to passe your time with me in diversions, in books, in entertainments, and no manner of businesse intrude upon us but at stated times ; for, tho' you are made to be the delight of my eyes, and food of all my senses and faculties, yet a turn of care and huswifry, and I know not what

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

prepossession against conversation pleasures, robs me of the witty and the handsome woman to a degree not to be expressed. I will work my brains and fingers to procure us plenty of all things, and demand nothing of you but to take delight in agreeable dresses, cheerfull discourses, and gay sights attended by me. This may be done by putting the kitchen and the nursery in the hands I propose, and I shall have nothing to do but to passe as much time at home as I possibly can, in the best company in the world. We cannot tell here what to think of the tryall of my Lord Oxford; if the Ministry are in earnest in that, and I should see it will be extended to a length of time I will leave them to themselves and wait upon you. Miss Moll grows a mighty beauty, and she shall be very prettily dressed, as likewise shall Betty and Eugene, and if I throw away a little money in adorning my brats I hope you will forgive me. They are, I thank God, all very well, and the charming form of their mother has temper'd the likeness they bear to their rough sire, who is, with the greatest fondnesse,

Your most oblig'd and most obedient husband,

RICHARD STEELE.

CHELSEA, June 24, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

I RECEIVED a letter from you without date. Your first article is about Sam, for whom you have the enclosed advice. There was no danger of my being a manager against Lord Oxford without I had sought

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

it, which I was far from doing ; so far from that, that I had not the curiosity to be there to-day, which was the first day of his trial. I am at Chelsea, with my books ; and, by the help of God, will, for the future, avoid all odious offices, except where the safety of my country is immediately concerned. I wish the behaviour of selfish and unskilful [people] may not put us into the danger which we escaped only by the intervention of Providence.

I have been at Chelsea ever since Saturday, and have enjoyed great satisfaction in my solitude. Betty and Molly were with me here yesterday night, that is, on Sunday evening ; they were very good company, and I treated them with strawberries and cream, and, according to my fond way, ate more than both of them.

I do not design to be at the House of Commons during the trial ; but pass my time, while it lasts, in what will, I hope, bring a large sum of money in the winter.

I am glad your opinion falls in with mine, as to parting with Dymock, &c.

I am, dear Prue,

Ever yours,

RICHARD STEELE.

July 11, 1717.

TEN THOUSAND TIMES MY DEAR, DEAR, PRETTY
PRUE,

I HAVE been in very, very great pain for having omitted writing last post. You know the unhappy

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

gaiety of my temper when I have got in ; and indeed I went into company without having writ before I left my house in the morning, which I will not do any more. It is impossible to guess at all the views of courtiers ; but, however, I am of opinion the Earl of Oxford is not in so triumphant a way as his friends imagine. He is to be prosecuted by way of Bill, or Act of Parliament, next session, in order to punish him according as he shall appear to deserve ; and, in the mean time, to be excepted out of the Act of Grace which comes out next week.

Please to take the advice you give me on this subject, and keep your conversation out of this dispute. Your letter has extremely pleased me with the gaiety of it, and you may depend upon it, my ambition is now only turned towards keeping that up in you, and giving you reasons for it in all things about you. Two people who are entirely linked together, in interest, in humour, and affection, may make this being very agreeable ; the main thing is, to preserve always a disposition to please and be pleased. Now as to your ladyship, when you think fit, to look at you, to hear you, to touch you, gives delight in a much greater degree than any other creature can bestow ; and, indeed, it is not virtue, but good sense and wise choice, to be constant to you. You did well not to dwell upon one circumstance in your letter ; for, when I am in good health, as thank God I am at this present writing, it awakes wishes too warmly to be well borne when you are at so great a distance. I do not see any mention of your man Sam ; I hope the doctor's prescription has been useful to him.

Think, dream, and wish for nothing but me ; who

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

make you a return in the same affection to you. For ever, your most obsequious, obedient husband,

RICHARD STEELE.

Pray date your letters.

July 26, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

I HAVE your kind letter, which expresses your fears that I do not take care of myself, as to catching cold, and the like. I am careful enough when I am awake ; but in the night the clothes are kicked on the floor, and I am exposed to the damp till the coolness awakes me. This I feel at present in my arms and legs, but will be carefully tucked up hereafter. I wait with impatience for the receipt of money out of the Treasury, to make further payments. I believe, when I have it, I shall wholly turn off my coach-horses ; for, since I am at my study whole days together, it is, I think, a senseless thing for me to pay as if I was padding all the while, and shewing myself to the world. I have sent your enclosed to Mrs. Keck. She came into the dining-room to me when I sent away my last letter, and we had some tea ; and, instead of such chat as should naturally arise between a great gallant and a fine lady, she took upon her to tell me, that I did spend my money upon my children, but that they ought to be better accommodated as to their dress, and the like. She is, indeed, a very good *Prue* ; and, though I divert myself with her gravity and admonition, I have a sincere respect for her.

I was last night so much enamoured with an author I was reading, and some thoughts which I put together on that occasion, that I was up till morning, which

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

makes me a little restive to-day. Your daughter Moll has stole away my very heart ; but doubt not but her brother and sister will recover their share when we are all together, except their mother robs them all of him who is, Dear Prue,

Entirely yours,

RICHARD STEELE.

HAMPTON COURT, Aug. 31, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

I WISH you would once say, you would like a thing, because I like it. I know not whether what I have taken is to be called in a court. It is a fore-door, at which a coach can set down at the very threshold, in Hart Street, Covent Garden ; and behind it a little court, in which there is but one house, into King Street, Covent Garden. I have taken no lease, and can part with it when I please to Mr. Wilks, who designs to buy it of the landlord. As to all other matters, I am contriving for the best. You talk of the cheapest way, &c., to get to town. I beg of you to be easy in such points ; you shall have everything your heart can wish, in reach of a moderate fortune. Pray be contented with laying up all your estate, which I will enable you to do ; for you shall be at no manner of charge on anything in nature, for yourself, children, or servants, and they shall be better provided for than any other family in England ; for I shall turn my expence and delight all that way. Therefore, in the name of God, have done with talk of money, and do not let me lose the right I have in a woman of wit and beauty, by eternally turning herself into a dun. Forgive the comparison. When my

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTERS

heart is fixed to think of you as the object of love, esteem, and friendship, and all that is soft ; it is in a moment turned into sorrow and anxiety, to find ways to make you contented about trash and dirt. Pray let it be otherwise : till you do, a thousand good qualities in you are (like a miser's wealth) mine without enjoyment. Your son grows a lusty boy, and is your servant, as is his father most heartily.

RICHARD STEELE.

I writ to you a note to-day before, by one going [to] town ; and write again, having occasion to send Wilmot on other business.

Sept. 20, 1717.

MY DEAR PRUE,

I HAVE yours of the 16th and am heartily troubled that we share in a new calamity, to wit having the same distemper. Pray take care of your self and you will find that we shall be in a great plenty before another year turns round. My dear wife, preserve your self for him that sincerely loves you, and to be an example to your little ones of religion and virtue. If it pleases God to blesse us together with life and health, we will live a life of piety and chearfull virtue. Your daughter Besse gives her duty to you, and says she will be your comfort, but she is very sorry you are afflicted with the gout. The brats my girles stand on each side the table, and Molly says that what I am writing now is about her new coat. Besse is with me till she has new cloaths. Misse Moll has taken upon her to hold the sand-box, and is so impertinent in her office that

STEELE TO MARY SCURLOCK

I cannot write more ; but you are to take this letter
as from your three best freinds

BESSE, MOLL, and THEIR FATHER.

Eugene was very well this morning.

STAMFORD, Oct. 23, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

I AM got thus far ; and my journey, I think, does
me as much good for the gout, as rocking the same
way did you for the spleen.

I have ever proposed to myself to move in as useful
a sphere to mankind as I was able, and have this
journey taken with me Mr. Majon, a French minister
(whom you have seen) in order to speak French readily
at my return ; for I find one cannot understand what
passes without that language. He lies in the same
room with me on the road ; and the loquacity which
is usual at his age, and inseparable from his nation, at
once contributes to my purpose, and makes him very
agreeable. It is my business while I am absent from
you, to fill my leisure hours with as much innocent
amusement as I can.

The children are almost always in my head at the
same time with yourself, and I hope we shall, when
God blesses us in a meeting, contrive to make them a
pleasure as a care. I take very great care of myself
in hopes of that happy hour, and am,

Your most affectionate, obsequious husband,

RICHARD STEELE.

NOTES

THE correspondence of Dean Swift, first published at various times by various persons, is most completely set forth in Sir Walter Scott's sumptuous edition of the Works. The foregoing selections are printed from the corrected second edition of that book, which was published in 1824, and has not, at present, been superseded. The 'Journal to Stella' for June 17, 1712; January 3, 10; February 6, 13, 14; March 8, 9, 1713, has been freshly collated with the manuscript in the British Museum.

Addison's Letters are taken from the enlarged reprint of Bishop Hurd's edition of the Works, first published in 1811, which appeared in Bohn's British Classics, 1854—1856.

The Correspondence of Sir Richard Steele was first published by John Nichols in 1809. The manuscripts are now in the British Museum, and were freshly collated for Mr. Aitken's careful 'Life of Steele,' 1889, which contains many new letters. The present selections are printed from the manuscripts.

In all cases of doubt, arising from torn manuscript, indistinct writing, or divergences between printed authorities, the conjectural reading is enclosed in square brackets. Discussion of textual details has been avoided.

The portrait of Swift (p. 106) is from the original by Jervas, painted in 1708, now in the National Portrait Gallery.

That of Addison (frontispiece) is from a print "sold by J. Tonson," after Sir Godfrey Kneller's portrait, painted about 1703.

That of Steele (p. 198) is from a print "I. Simon fecit," after Sir Godfrey Kneller's portrait, painted in 1713.

TABLE OF DATES

SWIFT'S CORRESPONDENCE.

Birth	...	...	...	...	...	November 30,	1667
To Trinity College, Dublin	...	...	...	...	...	...	1682
Stella born	...	...	...	...	...	March 13,	1682
First engagement with Sir W. Temple at Moor Park, and first meeting with Esther Johnson (Stella)	...	...	...	...	...	...	1689
Ordained priest	...	...	...	...	...	...	1695
Proposal to Jane Waryng (Varina)	...	...	...	...	...	...	1696
Earliest political activity	...	...	...	...	...	...	1697
Death of Temple...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1699
Livings of Laracor, Agher, and Rathbeggan, given by Whigs	...	...	...	...	...	...	1700
In London	...	...	...	...	...	May-September	1701
Stella and Dingley to Ireland	...	...	...	...	...	...	1701
Accession of Anne	...	...	...	...	...	...	1702
Tisdall's proposal to Stella	...	...	...	...	...	...	1704
Visits to London	...	...	...	...	...	1702, 1704,	1705
Friendship with Addison, Steele, Congreve, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	1705
To London, the battle of the First Fruits	...	...	...	...	...	...	1707
First meeting with Esther Vanhomrigh (Vanessa)	...	...	...	...	...	...	1708
Sits to Jervas for his portrait	...	...	...	...	...	...	1708
Parting with the Whigs, visit to Ireland	...	...	...	...	...	...	1709
Return to London, with formal commission for the First Fruits, introduced to Harley and begins the 'Examiner'	...	...	...	...	...	...	1710
The 'Saturday' dinners, and the Brothers' Club	...	...	...	...	...	...	1711
Guiscard stabs Harley	...	...	...	...	...	March	1711
Death of the Duke of Hamilton	...	...	...	...	...	...	1712
Dean of St. Patrick's	...	...	...	...	...	April 23,	1713
Vanessa goes to Ireland...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1714
The Scriblerus Club	...	...	...	...	...	...	1714

TABLE OF DATES

Swift retires to the country, and thence to Ireland. Harley						
forced to resign	...	...	...	...	...	July 1714
Death of Queen Anne	...	...	...	...	...	July 1714
Bolingbroke joins the Pretender, Harley in the Tower	...	...	...	...	...	March 1715
Marriage with Stella (?)	...	...	...	...	...	1716
Death of Vanessa	...	...	...	...	...	1720
Beginning of Irish political work	...	...	...	...	...	1720
Bolingbroke home from exile	...	...	...	...	...	1723
The Drapier Letters	...	...	...	...	...	1724
Death of Harley	...	...	...	...	...	1724
Visit to England, intimacy with Pope, introduction to Walpole	...	...	...	...	...	March to August 1726
'Gulliver's Travels'	...	...	...	...	...	November 1726
To England, Accession of George II.	...	...	...	...	...	April to June 1727
Final return to Ireland	...	...	...	...	...	September 1727
Death of Stella	...	...	...	...	...	January 28, 1728
Political tracts for Ireland	...	...	...	...	...	1728-1736
Gay's 'Beggars' Opera,' Pope's 'Dunciad'	...	...	...	...	...	1728
Congreve's death	...	...	...	...	...	February 1728
Gay's 'Polly' proscribed. He settles with Duke and Duchess of Queensberry	...	...	...	...	...	1729
Gay's death	...	...	...	...	...	Dec. 1732
Arbuthnot's death	...	...	...	...	...	1735
Bolingbroke to France again	...	...	...	...	...	1736
Beginning of decay	...	...	...	...	...	1738
Entire apathy	...	...	...	...	...	1742
Death	...	...	...	...	...	October 19, 1745

ADDISON'S CORRESPONDENCE.

Birth	...	...	...	...	...	May 1, 1672
To Queen's College, Oxford	...	...	...	...	...	1687
Travelling pension of £300 a year, through interest of Lord Halifax	...	...	...	...	...	1699
Returns to England and joins Kit-Cat Club	...	...	...	...	...	1703
Commissioner of Appeals	...	...	...	...	...	1704
Under-Secretary to Sir Charles Hedges	...	...	...	...	...	1706
Secretary in Ireland, intimacy with Swift	...	...	...	...	...	1708
First contribution to 'The Tatler'	...	...	...	...	...	May 1709
Fall of the Whigs and consequent loss of position	...	...	...	...	...	1710
Starting of 'Spectator'	...	...	...	...	...	March 1, 1711
Appearance of 'Cato'	...	...	...	...	...	1713

TABLE OF DATES

Quarrel with Pope	...	...	...	...	...	1715
Accession of George I., Addison again Chief Secretary to						
Lord Lieutenant of Ireland	...	...	...	...	...	1714-1715
The 'Freeholder'	...	...	...	December	1715-June	1716
Commissioner for Trades and Colonies	...	...	...			1716
Marriage with Charlotte, Countess of Warwick	...	...	...	August 2,		1716
Secretary of State	...	...	...	...	1717-March	1718
Quarrel with Steele	...	...	...	...	...	1719
Death	...	...	...	...	June 17,	1719

STEELE'S CORRESPONDENCE.

Birth	...	...	...	...	...	March 12, 1672
Mary Scurlock born	...	...	...	...	...	Nov. 4, 1678
To Charterhouse, where Addison joined him two years later						1684
To Christ Church, Oxford	...	...	...	...	...	1689
Enlisted as private in Duke of Ormond's Guards, ensign in						
Coldstream Guards, ultimately a captain	...	...	...	...	...	1694-1700
First arrest for debt	...	...	...	...	...	1700
'The Christian Hero'	...	...	...	...	...	1701
'The Funeral,' play inspired by Collier's attack on immor-						
ality of the stage	...	...	...	...	...	1701
Marriage with Margaret Stretch <i>née</i> Ford	...	...	...	...	...	1705
Gentleman-waiter to Prince George	...	...	...	...	...	1706
Death of the first Mrs. Steele	...	...	...	December 1706 or January		1707
'Gazateer'	...	...	...	...	...	1704
Left army	...	...	...	Some time before August		1707
Marriage with Mary Scurlock	...	...	...	September 9,		1707
Mrs. Steele adopts her husband's natural daughter, Miss						
Ousley, then at a boarding school	...	...	...	...	...	1708
Elizabeth Steele born	...	...	...	...	March 26,	1709
'The Tatler' started	...	...	...	...	April	1709
Commissioner in Stamp-office	...	...	...	...	...	1710
Richard Steele born	...	...	...	...	May 25,	1710
Meets Pope	...	...	...	...	June	1711
Eugene Steele born	...	...	...	...	March 4,	1712
Mary Steele born	...	...	...	...	...	1713
Resigns position in Stamp-office and pension from Royal						
Household	...	...	...	...	...	1713
M.P. for Stockbridge	...	...	...	...	August	1713
'The Guardian,' and 'The Englishman'	1712, 1713	
Expulsion from the House	March 18,	1714

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Manager of Drury Lane	1714
M.P. for Boroughbridge	February	1715
Knighted	April,	1715
'The Englishman,' vol. ii.	...	...	...	...	July	1715
Lady Steele to Wales	...	...	...	...	...	1716-1717
The 'Fish Pool' scheme	...	...	...	...	...	1716-1718
In Scotland	1717-1718
Lady Steele died	December 26,	1718
Death	September 1,	1729

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